

# **Dead on Arrival**

*the seven fatal errors*

*of sola-scriptura (bible-only)*

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David L. Gray,



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~ **this work is dedicated to** ~

the Holy Trinity  
the Blessed Virgin Mother  
St. Joseph, my Patron Saint  
my Guardian Angel,  
the Communion of Saints,

*and to:*

Ezekiel G. Hasbrook,  
my friend and favorite Calvinist,  
whose passionate (and sometimes fanatically honest)  
defense of *sola-scriptura* inspired me to complete this book

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## **preface:**

**T**he purpose of this book is to assist both Catholics and Protestants in better understanding the inherent errors found in the doctrine of *sola-scriptura* by providing a clear, concise, and solid presentation of the facts.

In a strictly puritanical sense, *sola-scriptura* remains to be a very peculiar doctrine for Catholics to refute, because it is foreign to the Catholic understanding of Divine Revelation. *Sola-scriptura* is to Catholicism what a small meteor is to the sun.

The Catholic Church, being the true Church of Christ, founded by the Apostles themselves, never needs to defend why She believes in two distinct modes of transmission of divine revelation; those being: (1) Sacred Scripture, which is “the speech of God as it is put down in writing under the breath of the Holy Spirit” (Dei Verbum 9); and (2) Sacred Tradition, which consists of what the Apostles themselves received from Jesus’ teaching and example and handed on to us through their successors, as well as what they learned from the Holy Spirit. Neither does the Protestant religion (if there is such a homogenous thing) need to defend why, as a *post-biblica* religion, it believes in the sole authority of the Bible. That is, it is understandable why the Catholic Church, as a *pre-biblica* religion, does not rely on sacred Scripture alone as its only source of truth, but why Protestants, whose religion was started with the Bible in hand, insist on being strictly a people of the book.

Notwithstanding the Protestant foundation, the Catholic interest in exposing the errors of *sola-scriptura* can be best explained through Luke’s narrative of the *Prodigal Son* (cf. Lk.

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15:11-32). In imitation of the younger brother, the inheritance that the Protestants squandered is the Bible itself. The Bible is the great treasure of the Church that they freely left home with, but lost all true understanding of shortly thereafter.

How did this son squander his inheritance you ask? He lost the truth by letting anyone interpret his gift. For, first, there was one and then there were thousands upon thousands of different Protestant communities interpreting the same book in thousand upon thousand different ways. Whereas the *Prodigal Son* looked nothing like his Jewish father as he slept with swine, neither do the thousands upon thousands of Protestant churches, all claiming to interpret the Bible authentically, resemble the oneness of God. “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord” (Dt. 6:4). In this sense, every Protestant is a lost sheep, and those of us *In Christ* should do all that we can to guide them back to the one sheepfold. Our arms should be as inviting as those of the father whose son returned home. Our feast is the Real Body and Blood of Christ Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. The Protestant religion is teetering on this fallacy of *sola-scriptura*, and when it falls so will their entire cacophonous institution.

I am not being overly polemic in titling this book *Dead on Arrival*. In the forthcoming chapters, I will prove that *sola-scriptura* is a dead teaching. I will prove that Satan, the Father of lies, inspired this fallacy of *sola-scriptura* only to divide God’s children. Whenever and wherever Christians are divided, Satan is winning. From the very beginning and until today, this error has been the source of nothing less but strife, chaos, confusion, hate, war, persecution, murders, and

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malcontent. I will also prove that *sola-scriptura* is a relativistic and individualist teaching that has led Christians into secularism.

In the beginning, we as Catholics, in some places, fell into Satan's trap by returning violence for violence, pride for pride, persecution for persecution, and hate for hate. We lost that battle because that is not who we are. We belong to the Truth and the Truth is Love (Cf. Jn. 14:6; 1 Jn. 4:8). Let us not quarrel, but "be gentle with everyone, able to teach, tolerant, correcting opposition with holiness. It may be that God will grant them repentance that leads to knowledge of the truth and that they may return to their senses out of the devil's snare, where they are entrapped by him, for his will" (1 Tim. 2:24-26). "Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope, but do it with gentleness and reverence" (1 Peter 3:15-16). But do not take our call to be gentle as a call to be lazy and inept, rather, "always proclaim the word, be persistent whether it is convenient or inconvenient; convince, reprimand, encourage through all patience and teaching" (2 Tim. 4:2). Lastly, always remember who the father of this fallacy is. This is a spiritual battle! The process of unity begins and ends with prayer, fidelity to the Truth, and sacrifice.

The order of the chapters in this book does not have anything to do with any ranking of importance or what I believe to be the worst or most dangerous of the errors. On the contrary, I believe that they are all equally errant and equally problematic, but we needed to begin with the key propagating source of the error first - that being Martin Luther, then deal with what Scripture itself has to say about

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*sola-scriptura*, and then to conclude with the plain error of *sola-scriptura* not having the evidence of being something that truly works or that God has blessed with the imprint of Divine unity, as He has blessed His Catholic Church with.

Throughout these chapters, I will make a clear case for what I believe to be the Fatal Errors of *sola-scriptura* by using logic, reason, and contrasting the teaching itself to what sacred Scripture says and what the Catholic Church teaches. The base constructs that I will lay *sola-scriptura* on top of will be the Latin medieval axiom ‘*Bonum ex intergra causa, malus ex quocumque defecto*’ - ‘[Something can be regarded as] good [if it seems truly so] in every respect, [but] bad [if there is] any defect at all’. That is, if all the criteria of *sola-scriptura* are found to be truly positive, then the teaching can be worthily accepted. However, if only a single criterion is found to be doubtful then acceptance can be temporarily withheld until further examination. If the said doubt cannot be resolved, then acceptance of the whole teaching can legitimately be withheld. Each chapter in this book will test and grade the doctrine of *sola-scriptura* and its fruits against this axiom.

Having convinced the reader (if convincing was necessary), Appendix A was inserted to answer the next question, ‘What do I do Now?’ Having completely dismantled the Protestant understanding of sacred Scripture, Biblical interpretation, and the proper use of the Bible in the life of the Church, Appendix B was inserted for the hope of reinstruction. The purpose of Appendix C is to prove the case that the early Fathers of the Church never believed the Bible to be what was necessary for salvation.

## **PREFACE**

I hope you enjoy reading this book as much as I enjoyed writing it!

David L. Gray  
August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2009  
Feast Day of Saint Dominic





## chapter one:

# *The First Fatal Error*

## **Martin Luther - an Inauthentic Prophet with an Inauthentic Message**

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**T**he doctrine of *sola-scriptura*, which teaches that Scripture is the sole authority for the Christian and the church, is an innovation in Christian doctrine; meaning that, it has no roots or grounding in the true teachings of the Apostles. Search the Scriptures, search the writings of the Church Fathers, and search the teachings of the Church for the first fifteen hundred years and you will find no trace of this doctrine anywhere.

Being a *post-biblica* religion, Protestants innocently approach Scriptural interpretation under the cloud of Apostolic ignorance. The Protestant examines Scripture and says, “This is what I *believe* that Peter and Paul meant.” In contrast, the Catholic Church examines Scripture and Tradition and says, “Peter and Paul were the founders of our Church and this is what they taught us.” Whereas the former assumes meaning, the latter knows the meaning. These two approaches are radically juxtaposed to one another.

As a dogma, it originated not in the Apostolic Church, but first informally at the hands of one individual, Martin Luther (1483-1546), during the development of his inordinately linear approach to Christocentrism, and later formally through the systemization of John Calvin and others.

Informally *Sola-scriptura* (Scripture alone/Bible only) emerged primarily as a result of Luther’s struggle to defend

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his two earlier linear innovations, which were *sola-fide* (by faith-alone) and *sola-gratia* (by grace-alone). On April 18, 1521, Martin appeared before the general assembly at the Diet of Worms (a town in Germany) where he was summoned to give a response to the critiques of his published writings. It was in his affirmation to those writings at the Diet of Worms that Luther first asserted his belief in Scripture alone being his sole source of authority. He stated: “Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Scriptures or by clear reason (for I do not trust either in the pope or in councils alone, since it is well known that they have often erred and contradicted themselves), I am bound by the Scriptures I have quoted and my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and will not recant anything, since it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience. May God help me. Amen”

Notice in this assertion (not yet a doctrine) how Luther offers no claim that Scripture supports his new standard of truth. On the contrary, he clearly states that his reason for believing in Scripture alone is because he does not trust the pope or the councils. Essentially, he asserts that he is clinging to Scripture alone not for positive reasons or even theological proofs, but because he has become disenchanted. He then goes on to make another statement that he fails to support with proof – that “it is well known that they have often erred and contradicted themselves.” This non-Apostolic, non-Scriptural, bail-out of one man then took on a life of its own.

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### **the teaching of the apostles**

Let us be very clear on this vital issue, Martin Luther was not one of the twelve Apostles of Jesus Christ! Neither did Luther personally know any of the twelve. Because Luther was neither an Apostle nor a student of the Apostles, and because his teaching of *sola-scriptura* is not found anywhere in the history of the Church, we know that *sola-scriptura* is a grave heresy and should be automatically rejected for those reasons alone.

Sacred Scripture is clear on the fact that followers of Christ Jesus are called to follow only the authentic teachings of the Apostles:

1. Speaking to the seventy-two who He sent, Jesus said, “Whoever listens to you listen to me. Whoever rejects you rejects me. And whoever rejects me rejects the one who sent me” (Lk. 10:16).
2. “I pray not only for them [(the Apostles)], but also for those who will believe in me through their word” (Jn. 17:20).
3. “The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. “Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” And when He said this He breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them and whose sins you retain are retained” (Jn. 20:20-23). Who other than the Apostles (the New Covenant ordained Priesthood) and their successors, only found in the bishops of the Catholic Church,

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has Christ Jesus given to both forgive and retain our sins on earth?<sup>1</sup>

4. “They devoted themselves to the teaching of the Apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread, and to the prayers” (Acts 2:42).
5. “But if I should be delayed, you should know how to behave in the household of God, which is the Church of the living God, the Pillar and Foundation of Truth” (1 Tim. 3:15). “So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the holy ones and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as the capstone” (Eph. 2:19-20).
6. “Therefore, brothers, stand firm and hold fast to the traditions that you were taught, either by oral statement or by a letter of ours” (2 Thess. 2:15).
7. “We ourselves heard this voice come from Heaven while we were with Him on the holy mountain. Moreover, we possess the prophetic message that is altogether reliable. You will do well to be attentive to it, as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.” (2 Pet. 1:18-19).

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<sup>1</sup> The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* defines *Apostolic Succession* as the handing on of apostolic preaching and authority from the Apostles to their successors the bishops through the laying on of hands, as a permanent office in the Church (Cf. CCC 77, 861).

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8. “But even if we or an angel from Heaven should preach [to you] a gospel other than the one that we preached to you, let that one be accursed!” (Gal. 1:8).
9. “And what you heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will have the ability to do well” (2 Tim. 2:2).

Even believers of *sola-scriptura* must admit that Scripture itself demands that we believe and follow only the Apostle’s teaching and reject all others. Again, Martin Luther was not an Apostle.

### **a treatment on the man behind the teaching**

Whenever an apostle or a prophet would bring a message, which was new or different from what the people had heard before, the messenger would always open up first by giving his hearers his spiritual resume. For example, “Moses informed Aaron of all the Lord had said in sending him, and of all the various signs He had enjoined upon him. . . . Aaron told the elders everything the Lord said to Moses and he performed the signs before the people” (Exo 4:28 . . .30). “John the Baptist said, “I am the voice of the one crying out in the desert, “Make straight the way of the Lord” (Jn. 1:23). St. Paul always began his letters to the Churches by first giving witness to his mission *In Christ*; “Paul, an apostle not from human beings nor through a human being but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead” (Gal 1:1).

In this light and practice of every faithful apostle of God, it devolves upon us to examine the life (tree) and teachings

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(fruit) of Martin Luther, so that we might evaluate whether his life and teachings were consistent with all true prophets and apostles who God has sent. In *Cooperating with God - Life with Cross* I enumerated and explained the Four Marks of every authentic prophet of God and the Four Marks of every authentic message from God. I will draw from some of that same body of material here and expound upon it in the context of Luther's life and teaching. This will enable us to discern who sent us Martin Luther and *sola-scriptura*; God or Satan.

1. Prophets are Bold Crusaders of the Kingdoms' Solidarity-

No true prophet of God has *ever* been sent to divide God's people or to scatter the Shepherd's sheep (Cf. Mt. 12:30; Lk. 11:23). There are only two types of missions that prophets are sent on; that is, either to work *within* the established ecclesia to call to people into closer union with God (through love, obedience, sacrifice, and repentance), or to work *outside* of the ecclesia to bring those from outside *in* (through repentance). Moses and Peter are types of the former, while Jonah and Paul represent the latter. Jesus, being the Last Prophet, was born within the circle of God's chosen people, but died so that all people might be saved *In Him* - the one Body of Christ. That is, His Father sent His Son first to the Jews and then to the Gentiles.

The prophet lives, breathes, and dies for the unity of God's people. Their every thought, action, and

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word are directed towards unifying all of God's children into one ecclesia. While God gives His children the gift of prophecy, so that we might unite, Satan gives *his* children the gift of prophecy, so that they might use it to cause division. His children call their lies, 'Direct Revelations from God,' but they always contradict the Church's Deposit of Faith.<sup>2</sup>

Because the prophet has accepted their vesselhood, they are fearless and bold in their call for unity. They are *completely* loyal to the Church and the doctrine of God. They only speak what God has given them to say, regardless of the consequences. Because of their loyalty to the Church, fidelity to the doctrine, and obedience to God, they are usually murdered by the mob. Many of those who have shared their gift of prophecy in the New Covenant has become Corporeal Martyrs.

The true prophet and apostle of God is never an island unto himself, rather, he is only a participant in the prophecy (message) of God and the apostleship (sending) of Christ Jesus. The true prophet is in love with the *Shema* ("Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord. . . ." - Dt. 6:4-9, 11:13-21; Num. 15:37-41), because the *Shema* lives and breathes within him. For the prophet and apostle to desire something less than

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<sup>2</sup> The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* defines the *Deposit of Faith* as: The heritage of faith contained in sacred Scripture and Tradition, handed on in the Church from the time of the Apostles, from which the Magisterium draws all that it proposes for belief as being divinely revealed (CCC 84; cf. 1202).

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unity it would be to deny and desire something less than who they are.

The reason why we must class Martin Luther as being a false prophet is because, when we examine his life, we fail to see any resemblance of a person who is ready to die for the unity of the Church. On the contrary, Luther seemed intent on tearing the Church apart. Even when he was given every opportunity, through the encouragement of his peers to work for reform inside of the Church, Luther failed the test of patience, trust, and prudence. When confronted by Cardinal Cajetan in 1518, concerning his theological errors, Luther failed to exercise the gifts of humility, obedience, and faith. After his teachings were soundly shown to be unorthodox during his debate with Johann Eck at Leipzig, during the summer of 1519, Luther failed in the virtues of charity, peace, kindness, and, again, humility. Even after being condemned by two of the leading Catholic universities of the day (Cologne and Louvain), Luther still refused to even *consider* recanting. On June 15, 1520, Pope Leo X issued a papal bull, entitled Exsurge Domine ('Lord cast out'), against 41 articles of Luther's teaching, which he, in turn, burned on December 10 of that same year.

Afterward, Luther continued his humanistic slide into demonic narcissism by publishing several violent tracts against the Catholic Church and Her teachings. The first of these tracts was Address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation, which argued and

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incited for the German people to reform the Catholic Church. His second tract of the summer, *A Prelude Concerning the Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, rejected four of the seven Sacraments of the Church, denied the Mass, attacked the Real Presence of Christ Jesus in the Sacrament of the Eucharist, made vehement charges against papal authority, and asserted the supremacy of Holy Scripture and the rights of individual conscience.

Shortly before the Diet of Worms in the spring of 1521, Pope Leo X issued the bull of formal excommunication of Martin Luther. The false prophet had been removed from the Church because of his heresies, but also notable was his great lack of having any evidence of any fruits of the Holy Spirit. Luther would no longer be able to participate as a true reformer of the Church, having been cast out of Her midst. Again, true prophets and apostles fight for the unity of the Church - they *never* attempt to prevail against Her - they use the gifts that God has given them to build Her up, not to tear Her down.

Martin Luther, the false prophet, allowed Satan to use him and it may have cost him his very soul. Unfortunately, we have received no evidence to suggest that grace-alone, faith-alone, or Scripture-alone saved this man's soul in the end. Indeed, pride alone will always destroy you.

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2. Prophets of God are always Holy -

From the moment that God converts the heart of the prophet or those who have been called to share His gift of prophecy, they become holy. Whether it was Moses (Cf. Exo. 3), Samuel (Cf. 1 Sam. 3), Isaiah (Cf. Isa. 6), Jeremiah (Cf. Jer. 1), or Paul (Cf. Acts 9), from the moment that the prophet is called, he is forever a changed person; that is, he is forever driven and set on fire to call God's people into the *Life with the Cross*.

Indeed, the defining difference between a true prophet and a false prophet is the authority of their mission and message. Speaking to the prophet Jeremiah, YHWH said this about false prophets, "From me they have no mission or command, and they do this people no good at all" (Jer. 23:32). Christ Jesus built upon this in His Sermon on the Mount when He said, "By their fruits you will know them" (Mt. 7:16). The them that He was referring to in the text is the false prophet, while the fruit represents both their life and the message. The authenticity of both must always be examined and discerned. More will be said later about discerning the authenticity of the prophet's message.

A clear indicator to discern whether a prophet has been sent by God or by Satan comes by examining his or her life from the hour of their conversion, the results of their mission, and their charity towards God and neighbor. Indeed, true prophets of God are sinners; that is, sometimes they do follow their own will instead of *Cooperating with God*, but the difference

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between the Mother Teresa's and Martin Luther's of the world is that while the true prophet progressively becomes more holy and more intimate with God, the false prophet goes from bad to worse; that is, he or she becomes progressively more selfish, prideful, and intimate with Satan.

In our brief examination of Martin Luther's activities between the years 1517 and 1521, we fail to see even a flicker of a person who is on the quest for greater holiness, service, or piety. On the contrary, what we do see is a person, in Luther, who is on a quest for self-destruction and the destruction of the Catholic Church.

As they grow *In Christ*, all true prophets and apostles decrease, they grow smaller as the shadow of Christ Jesus looms larger and larger over their life. That is not the case in Martin Luther's life. In his life, we do not see a little flower, but rather a persistent thorn. So corrupt were his morals that, even at the mature age of fifty-seven, he helped to keep quiet the scandalous affair of Philip of Hesse, rather than rebuke it from the beginning.

Martin Luther, the false prophet, having already broken his religious and priestly vows and married to a former nun (mother of his six children), spent the last decade of his life embroiled in German politics, continuing his violent ranting in *Of Councils and Churches* (1539), *Against the Anabaptist*, *Against Jews*, *Against the Papacy at Rome, Founded by the Devil*, and suffering from a chronic illness that made him a near

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invalid. Here is a human who earlier had opposed the burning of Anabaptists by Lutherans, but towards the end of his life had approved that they receive the death penalty on the grounds of sedition and blasphemy. So bankrupt was Luther's theology that he began teaching that divorce and polygamy are permissible. In addition to that, he wrote that all Jews who rejected Jesus as the Messiah should be deported to Palestine, have their synagogues burnt, be forbidden to lend money, and be compelled to earn their livelihood by tilling the soil.

Martin Luther would not be the last German to incite hatred and violence against the Jews. Ironically, it was the doctrine of *sola-scriptura* that weakened Protestantism in Germany to the point of near-collapse under the weight of Hitler's brand of mysticism in the 1930s.

Indeed, this man grew progressively further from God and neighbor rather than towards them. Truth in Love looks nothing like the life of Luther. It is impossible to love Christ Jesus unless we grow deeper in love with the Church that He founded through St. Peter and the other Apostles.

### 3. Prophets are Detached from the World -

One of the key reasons why the prophet is completely free and unafraid to speak the message given to him by God is because he is unencumbered by the system. While the prophet may very well be a priest and is usually a Pope, it is also true that he knows that he

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does not need those titles; that is, the desire for power, position, and prestige bears no weight in the heart of the true prophet of God. They do not care who you think *they are* and they surely do not care about who you think *you are*.

Prophets are not here to curry favor with you or with the world. They do not want or need your acceptance or awards. They do not step in line with evil. True prophets do not say what is popular or preach those *feel-good/non-convicting* messages that people in the *Circle of Hate* love to hear. Prophets say the hard things that separate the corrupt flesh from the spirit. There is nothing that you can give them to make them subject to you, because God is their source for all things. They do not *need* you. Even if you are their parent, spouse, or child - they will let you know that they do not *need* you. The prophet comes in the mold of the true disciple of Christ Jesus, who said, "If anyone comes to me without hating his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk. 14:26).

Do not be mistaken; some people have so much hate, anger, and pride built up inside of them that it appears to be the case that they are not currying favor from their object of vehemence. Martin Luther was just that type of guy. In a world where the Catholic Church was a monolithic institution, Luther must have sounded like a John the Baptist, crying out in the desert of Germany, 'Make way the linear path!'

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To some, he may have sounded like Jesus, ‘Woe to the Pope!’ On the contrary, true prophets and apostles separate themselves from the world, not out of the motive of hate, but, rather, out of the pure motive of Divine love. That is, they do not directly choose not to be a part of the world, but, rather, because they choose only God and His Holiness, their separation from sin and union with the Body of Christ is the due result of that choice.

Martin Luther, the false prophet, was far too involved in German politics and plots of succession amongst the German Princes for anyone to dare say that he loved not the attention of those in power and authority, from whom he also sought protection.

4. The Prophet’s Mission is always Confirmed by Miracles -

“Jesus sent out these twelve after instructing them thus, “Do not go into pagan territory or enter a Samaritan town. Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. As you go, make this proclamation: ‘The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, drive out demons. Without cost you have received; without cost, you are to give’ (Mt. 10:5-8).

Either at the hour of their conversion and/or at some time during their mission, God always manifests His love for His people through His prophets in miraculous ways that we can respond to in faith and come to believe. Miracles exceed and expand the

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constraints of all human reason and science, and demand a response of either growth in faith or growth in rebellion.

Oftentimes the visible miracle is simply the response of sinners who heard the words that God had given the prophet to proclaim and subsequently lead to their repentance and true conversion to love. The purer of a vessel the prophet is, the greater that God can pour out His love, mercy, and grace through her.

The Catholic Church has been greatly blessed with the miracle of having so many holy saints in Her ranks who God continues to work through, here on earth, long after their temporal death. Some of the saints' bodies have even been miraculously preserved incorrupt from decay or rotting for decades, even centuries after they had been buried. It takes a very cold heart not to give praise to God for such visible miracles.

The only miracle that we find present in the life of Martin Luther, the false prophet, is that, once again, a man had come and tried to bring down the Catholic Church. Despite his anger, displaced vigor, evil machinations, and heretical tracts, God used Luther's ill-intent to make His Catholic Church stronger. Out of the Council of Trent (1545-63), the Church began the great reform of Her clergy and more clearly expressed Her Apostolic beliefs. Through Luther's heretical designs, once again, we

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saw that God will go to any length to protect and preserve the Church of His Son.

If it was not enough to prove Martin Luther to be a false prophet and not endowed with the spiritual disposition of the type of humans who God has always used to convey His message in word and example, let us now proceed to examine the authenticity of Luther's message under the Four Marks that messages from God have; those being: (1) Of Holy Intent (meaning that it always brings peace and glorifies God); (2) On Time; (3) The Church Propagates and/or Confirms; (4) It Persist in Love and Truth:

1. Of Holy Intent -

Truth, Love, Empowering, and Transformative are all synonyms of the *word* (messages) from God, and whenever they occur - God is glorified. God's glory and His perfect will are the ultimate *Intent* of every message that God has given and continues to give us. Whether that message was given to a prophet so that God could be invited to heal the chaos within the prophet's soul or to proclaim His Divine love in a chaotic situation within the prophet's environment, the *Intent* of the message is for the prophet to be empowered to better love on neighbor, so that neighbor might be better enabled to draw nearer to God so that God might draw nearer to His creature and save him/her from perishing. In other words, whenever God gives anyone a message, with the intent to empower that person to better love Him, He

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is also simultaneously empowering that person to better love on their neighbor.

After earning Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees from the reputable University Erfurt in 1505, the young Martin Luther negotiated past his father's wish for his life that he become a lawyer. Instead, Luther decided to apply to become a monk at the house of the Augustinian Hermits in Erfurt. In this large mendicant order, Luther progressed seemingly well, even to being ordained a priest in 1507, just two years after he had professed his vows as a monk.

Perhaps his first notion of *sola-scriptura* came from his father after he had celebrated his first Mass. The elder Hans Luther asked his son, "Do you not read in Scripture that one shall honor one's father and mother?" Alternatively, perhaps he first thought of *sola-scriptura* on July 2, 1505, after he was struck by lightning. Receiving high volts of electricity into one's body can cause brain trauma. In his *Concerning Monk Vows*, Luther did give all credit to the terror, agony, and fear of death that he had experienced, from being struck by lightning for his linear sola-motive to become a monk. In *Table Talk*, he wrote that he had cried out in fervor, "Help St. Anne, and I'll become a monk." Later, in the former work, he wrote, "I vowed a constrained and necessary vow."

Notwithstanding his original intention, by 1515 Martin Luther, who had struggled with bouts of depression all of his life, was experiencing an inner spiritual turmoil and desperate to find a solution. As

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a Catholic, he seemed to be doing everything that he could; going to frequent confession, receiving the Holy Eucharist, devotion to St. Mary, and prayerfully studying Scripture, and, indeed, therein laid the mother of his spiritual failure; Martin Luther had fallen into monk effortdom. From his childhood, he had developed a great fear of death, Hell, and Satan. As a religious monk, Luther proved to be dutiful in doing, but failed in letting God. No one can make themselves holy, but Luther had tried to do that very thing and failed miserably. Knowing this, he abandoned his extreme works-theology for the extremely linear theology of grace-alone, faith-alone, and Scripture-alone. This too would fail him in the end.

*Sola-scriptura*, indeed, none of Luther's *solas* were of Holy Intent. They were just one man's attempt to find God, which ended up in public and, from there, took on a life of their own. Once there, Luther's theological ponderings ended up causing brokenness instead of healing, individualism instead of solidarity, bitterness instead of joy, war instead of peace, and hatred and distrust rather than love and faith. Not one of Luther's teachings directly resulted in God being glorified because of them. On the contrary, even today, many remain spiritually stuck because of his heresies. More will be said later, in chapter five, about this very sad result of Luther's theology.

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### 2. On-Time -

By their very Divine Nature, truly prophetic messages from God are always *On Time*, that is to say, that prophetic messages always specifically address the immediate chaotic situation at hand. *Chaotic situations* are those instances in which the Kingship of Christ Jesus is not being deferred to by the chief actors. In fact, the timeliness of prophetic messages only bolsters their practical effectiveness - they are always the type of message that not only demands a response (action) but also facilitates the ease of response from those who have been given ears to hear the message. The only people who fail to respond to prophetic messages are those who fear the consequences that come with trusting God.

Because prophetic messages intend to bring peace to a chaotic situation, they always force us to choose the opposite of what we have meandered in for some time. Just as the prophet refuses to curry favor with what is socially popular, the message given to him is oftentimes equally abrasive. This is why those in the *Circle of Hate* always fail to discern the authenticity of this characteristic. To them, the prophet's message is not *On Time*; rather it is outdated, outmoded, out of touch, and disqualifiable to modern normalcy.

It was not the Catholic Church who ignored Martin Luther's message; for, there is no good time for heresy and blasphemy. Rather, it was Martin who ignored the timely and prophetic message of the Church when She repeatedly asked him to exercise

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humility and patience and trust God to reform His Church.

3. The Church Propagates and/or Confirms -

The reason why the Catholic Church holds the position of authenticator, propagator, and protector of God's prophetic messages is because She is the Bride of Christ who best knows the voice and desires of Her Beloved (Cf. Eph. 5:25-27); She is the hypostatic Temple of the Holy Spirit; Her doctrine, duties, and mission are all supernaturally protected by the promise of Christ Jesus Himself who said, ". . . the gates of the netherworld shall never prevail against it" (Mt. 16:18). She was made in the image of Kingdom of God; She is the celebrant, administrator, and host of what God has given humanity for their Salvation; She is the pillar of truth (Cf. 1 Tim. 3:15) and the final authority of truth on earth (Cf. Mt. 18:15-18). This is why the angels and Jesus sent the women to first proclaim their message to the Church, and why all true prophets of God and visionaries, still today, trust the Church of Christ to authenticate, propagate, and protect the message and/or vision given them.

The Catholic Church considered Martin Luther's teaching and all of his *Ninety-Five Theses*, which were nailed to the door of All Saints Church, Wittenberg, on October 31, 1517. Forty-one of those theses were declared to be heretical. That means that Luther *could have* accepted the findings of the Church and

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continued to work within Her to fight for the Catholic propagation of those accepted theses, but that was not good enough for him. The ironic similarity between holy people and evil people is that both of them refuse to compromise on their beliefs.

#### 4. It Persists in Love and Truth -

Since we must discern the authenticity of the prophet, we must be even more vigilant in discerning the authenticity of his/her message, because while the prophet will die, their message will not. It will either forever go forward in love or hate - truth or lie. There are no new heresies, rather only recycled ones that have been merged with others, scaled-down, or put in a new container.

The object of God's message is to bring peace into chaotic situations. In contrast, the object of Satan's messages is to bring chaos into peace or more chaos into preexisting chaos. In other words, a message always serves as an answer to an immediate problem, and for God, the *problem* is the absence of the reign of His peace - for Satan, the *problem* is the absence of the reign of chaos. It holds that in times of true peace, the will of God is being done, and in times of chaos, the will of Satan is being done.

Therefore, a simple way for us to discern whether the prophet's message belongs to the *Circle of Grace* or the *Circle of Hate* is to examine whether his/her message (answer) works in *every* situation; that is, whether it is *always* true. If it is always true, then the

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message belongs to God, but if it sometimes fails to bring peace, then it belongs to Satan.

What can we discern about the prophetic quality of Martin Luther's message? Luther's teaching on *sola-scriptura* and its insistence on the individual's right and responsibility to authoritatively interpret Scripture on their own (not in harmony with the Magisterium) is the root cause of there being thousands upon thousands of different Protestant denominations. This teaching is the source of a great public scandal in Christianity. Christ Jesus prayed that we all would be one, just as He and Father are one (Cf. Jn. 17:21-22), and the Catholic Church, for nearly two millennia, has been God's sign and instrument to make His children one with Him. Protestantism spits in the face of God's intent through His One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. Luther's teachings do not persist in love or truth, but they do persist in hate and lies. The true prophet and apostle of God resembles the *just man* of *Psalm* 1 whose work always prospers. Contrast that with Martin Luther whose message has not prospered in love.

### **martin luther, the unreasonable one**

The reason in detailing Martin Luther's many human failings is not to condemn him (that he did or did not do on his own). That Catholics should pray for Luther's soul because his followers do not believe in praying for the dead is only a sad irony in this whole scandal. On the contrary, the goal

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here is to highlight this one very crucial point; that inasmuch as Luther taught that man, by reason and prayer alone, could always interpret Scripture correctly, he proved to be a man without the ability to always reason correctly. That is, if Martin Luther was not able to apply good reason to his own life on an improving basis, as all true prophets and apostles of God do, then there is no good reason for us to believe that he was able to consistently apply good reason to Scripture.

Reason serves as the motive of any action, decision, or belief that we engage in. In his encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*, Pope Benedict XVI wisely stated that “Reason always stands in need of being purified by faith.” That is, our reason for doing anything should always be centrally informed by our faith. Benedict goes on to say, “For its part, religion always needs to be purified by reason in order to show its authentically human face.”<sup>3</sup> In this latter point, Pope Benedict is saying that the *motive* of our religion should always serve as the centerpiece of how we express our faith through our religion.

Briefly summing all of this in the context of Martin Luther’s life and works, what we never see, from the hour that he decided to become a monk, to his involvement in German politics, to his final ranting against Anabaptists, Jews, and the Catholic Church, is a pure motive in any of it. Without a pure motive reason fails - it is instantly corrupted. Even while this corrupt faith can be purified by true faith, I beg to ask, ‘What did Luther have faith in other than in himself?’

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<sup>3</sup> *Caritas in Veritate*, Pope Benedict XVI. 56.

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Prudence teaches us to regulate our life and our actions in unity with the dictates of reason. It is by this habit that we always wisely discern and prudently determine the true good in every circumstance and prudently choose the right means to achieve that good. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* calls Prudence the *auriga virtutum* or ‘charioteer of the virtues’.<sup>4</sup> Martin Luther’s lack of prudence and his disability in being able to get better at making good decisions in life (that is, decisions that make all men better through truth in love) only further demonstrates that he lacked the good maturing reason, which is a fundamental trait in all true prophets and apostles of God.

On all of these grounds, I find no reason to believe that Martin Luther was a true prophet of God or that he was spiritually or emotionally sound enough to always authentically interpret Scripture.

### **martin luther, the excommunicated one**

It is quite strange indeed that from the moment that Martin Luther began teaching his doctrine in 1517 until the day that he was excommunicated in 1521, the only people who seemed the care about the authority of sacred Scripture were Catholics. For, from the many personal warnings, debates, and papal bulls issued to Luther by Pope Leo X, it is clear that the Catholic Church magnanimously and patiently followed the three-step process that Jesus Christ commanded all of us to follow when dealing with brothers who are sinning:

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<sup>4</sup> *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1997) paragraph no. 1806.

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“If your brother sins [against you], go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have won over your brother. If he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, so that every fact may be established on the testimony of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell the Church. If he refuses to listen even to the Church, then treat him as you would a Gentile or a tax collector. Amen, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven” (Mt. 18:15-18).

After four years of doing all that sacred Scripture commanded that She do, the Catholic Church was finally forced to excommunicate (“loose”) the brother who had failed his test of humility. Yet, what happened next was one of the most upsetting tragedies in the history of Christianity. Since the Catholic Church rightly dealt with Luther in the way that Jews in Jesus’ time would have dealt with “Gentiles or tax collectors”, by avoiding his company and separating itself from such an arrogant and unrepentant sinner, there were some Christians in Germany who disobeyed Jesus’ clear command and decided to embrace Luther and to follow his condemned teachings.

Whenever the word of God is disobeyed the consequences are always unfruitful. Disobedience to the word of God always causes disorder, division, and dysfunction. It is this sorry disobedience by the Christians who embraced Luther and his teachings, rather than separating themselves from them, as the Catholic Church

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had done, that has caused five hundred years of disorder, division, and dysfunction in the Christian community.

Because the Catholic Church has been given the authority from God to bound and loose on earth and in Heaven (Cf. Mt. 16:19, 18:18), whenever someone binds themselves to what has been loosed by the Church, they automatically separate themselves from the fullness of God's loving grace and from the community of unity, which is the Catholic Church in the Kingdom of God, and place themselves in nearer proximity of Satan and within the community of disorder, division, and dysfunction, which is the Protestant church.

Christian unity is not difficult to achieve with the grace of humility from God. All we need to do is cling to what the Church has bound and reject what She has loosed. For, what the Church has bound, God has also blessed.

### **conclusion**

This chapter alone is enough to discredit the doctrine of *sola-scriptura* on these three key foundational points:

1. As Christians, we are called to follow only the authentic teaching of the Apostles as given to them from Christ Jesus and them to us. There is only one Church in the world that has the Apostles themselves as their founder, and that is the Catholic Church.
2. Martin Luther was not an Apostle, neither were his teachings apostolic.
3. Martin Luther was a false prophet with a false message, and

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4. The very life of Martin Luther proves *sola-scriptura* to be an impractical fallacy; meaning that, it did not even work for him.

Anyone who builds their home on the foundation of Luther's extremely linear and heretical teachings will find themselves in the same position as him; that is, spiritually stuck and bearing little fruit of the holy spirit.

“A good tree does not bear rotten fruit, nor does a rotten tree bear good fruit. For every tree is known by its fruit. For people do not pick figs from thornbushes, nor do they gather grapes from brambles. A good person out of the store of goodness in his heart produces good, but an evil person out of a store of evil produces evil; for from the fullness of the heart the mouth speaks” (Lk. 6:43-44).

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## chapter two:

# *The Second Fatal Error*

## **Scripture Itself does not even Claim to be the Sole-Authority**

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**G**iven that *sola-scriptura* teaches that Scripture is the sole source of authority for the Christian and the Church, one would reasonably expect for Scripture to teach *sola-scriptura*, but it does not. Given that *sola-scriptura* teaches that the Church is not the sovereign and always correct interpreter of Scripture, but, rather, that prayerful and reasonable individual can be, one would reasonably expect for Scripture to teach that doctrine, but it does not. On the contrary, Scripture contains plenty of passages that refute both of these teachings. The irony here is almost too funny to laugh at, is it not? Scripture does not teach *sola-scriptura*.

The reason why *sola-scriptura* is not grounded in sacred Scripture is because it did not originally derive from the Scriptures. It originated from the imagination of one Martin Luther, who only asserted in the negative it as a *bailout* to support his other two heresies of *sola-gratia* and *sola-fide*, and his attempt to resolve his personal struggle with submitting to authority, which he may have had an issue with all of his life.

### **misinterpretation of scripture**

Create any silly doctrine in your head and I guarantee you that you will be able to find and interpret at least one passage of Scripture in the Bible to support it. All you need is a Bible and a good imagination. Finding what you want to find in

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the Bible is not hard at all. Satan's dialogue with Jesus in the desert is proof of that (Cf. Mt. 4:1-11).

It is terribly easy to find things that you can agree with, but it is much more difficult to agree with things that you find. There are three facts that I will make clear in this chapter, and they are as follows:

1. Scripture points to three other (equal or greater) sources of authority than itself.
2. Scripture points to the Church as being the final source of authority on earth, and
3. Nowhere does Scripture say that the Bible is necessary for Salvation.

It is almost easier to search the constitution of the United States of America and find an article that addresses the rights of a woman to have her child surgically aborted from her womb than it is to find one passage of Scripture in the Bible that supports the doctrine of *sola-scriptura*.

The centerpiece of the Protestant argument that the Bible teaches *sola-scriptura* is 2 Timothy 3:16, but before we get there let us examine the entire chapter, from the beginning, so that we will be able to understand the proper context of what St. Paul was writing to St. Timothy.

Paul opens this section with the words, "But understand this: there will be terrifying times in the last days." The 'But' here serves as a transition word from the point which he had not yet finished making in chapter two, concerning how he desires Timothy to conduct himself as an apostle of Christ. Paul's tone here is fatherly, as he engages Timothy in telling him about everything he is going to experience in the *Life*

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*with the Cross*; not from the perspective of someone who has simply read about it, but as a man who has lived it.

In vv. 23 to 26 of chapter two, Paul encourages Timothy to evangelize to everyone with truth in love, so that they will turn their hearts to God. Then he says, “But . . .” or to paraphrase, ‘Notwithstanding your good efforts, there will always be people who will reject the truth, just as Jannes and Jambres rejected Moses and offered themselves up to be destroyed, so too will all know their folly.’

### **two timothy 3:1-14**

Over the centuries, Christians who prefer living in distrustful despair rather than faithful hope have read these opening verses in chapter three of 2 Timothy and have assumed/interpreted them to be a predestined and unchangeable future for the world; a prophecy of doom and gloom for the last days of the world. Indeed, that will be the certain result if we Christians keep sitting on our collective butts and not go into the world and love on our neighbors and evangelize to them, just as Paul encouraged Timothy to do. On the contrary, these words written by the Apostle Paul are not a prophecy of what will come, but rather a warning of what may come if we fail to do what we were all created to do.

These verses do not constitute an unchangeable prophecy for the future. As Paul says himself, people have rejected the truth since the beginning, and the fruits of this brand of rebellion are spelled out in vv. 2 through 9. There has not been a time in the history of the world (after humanities’ ‘Original Sin’) when people who have rejected

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the truth did not behave in this pattern. We just talked about just such a person in the previous chapter of this book. The ‘last days’ that Paul is speaking about here are the ‘last days’ of an individual who rejects the truth; of a community that rejects the truth; of a nation that rejects the truth; and of a world that rejects the truth. Paul expressed this reality primarily on an individual level (Jannes and Jambres) because he had hope for the community and the world. Abraham had hope as well for the good people in the failed communities of Sodom and Gomorrah, and God had compassion for the righteous souls who lived in those cities and the nation of Nineveh. It is clear that all we need to do is get off of our collective butts and go evangelize to the cities like Jonah ~ go pray for them like Abraham - and go love them as Christ loved us (Cf. Jn. 15:12) and the world will be a much better place.

Having awoken his spiritual son up to the condition of man, Paul returns to give Timothy hope again, and this is what vv. 10 through 16 are all about. In vv. 10 through 11, Paul points to the example of his journey to Mount Calvary as an authoritative source of Apostolic teaching authority, “You have followed my teaching,” and adds, “In fact, all who want to live religiously *In Christ* will be persecuted.” He then portrays the Christian’s journey of purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecution, and sufferings as being the greater path to accession; that is in contrast with “wicked people and charlatans who will go from bad to worse.”

In v. 14 Paul admonishes Timothy to “remain faithful to what you have learned and believed because you know from who you learned it.” What Paul is referring to here is the

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Apostolic teaching of the Church. He then ties his Apostolic teaching to the sacred Hebrew Scriptures, which Timothy knew from childhood. It is about these sacred (not yet canonized) texts that Paul writes, “All Scripture is inspired by God.” Paul then goes on to tell Timothy what Scripture is useful for: “teaching, for refutation, for correction, and for training in righteousness.” Scripture is useful for these things because it was inspired by God, “so that one who belongs to God may be competently equipped for every good work.”

As of yet, we have not read anything in these passages, more especially ‘in context’, that supports the doctrine that Scripture alone is the sole source of authority for the Christian and the Church. Nevertheless, let us delve deeper into vv. 15 and 16 and examine if there is anything therein enclosed that teaches Luther’s doctrine.

### **two timothy 3:15**

“and that from infancy you have known [the] sacred Scriptures, which are capable of giving you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.”

Having stressed the authority of the transmission of the faith, through Apostolic example and preaching, Paul now moves to address the authority of sacred Scripture. What he does first is credit it to Timothy that he had known the sacred Hebrew Scriptures from his infancy. He then makes a very important point about what all Scripture is capable of doing; “capable of giving you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.” In fact, Paul’s assessment of Scripture is almost identical to Jesus’ assessment. Speaking to the Jews, Jesus

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said, “You search the Scriptures because you think you have eternal life through them; even they testify on my behalf. But you do not want to come to me to have life” (Jn. 5:39-40).

It is true today as it was when our Lord walked the earth in flesh. People are still trying to be saved through Scripture alone. It is an abuse of sacred Scripture to think that it is all that you need to be saved. The proper use of Scripture is to seek from it only what it is best capable of giving you; that is wisdom for your salvation. You are then called to take that wisdom and purify it with your faith *In* Jesus Christ so that you will be empowered to do the will of God because wisdom without faith is dead (Cf. 1 Cor. 1:19).

While Scripture is one of the best things that are capable of giving us wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus, Paul never says that it is the only thing that is capable of doing that. In the first place, Scripture itself is clear in saying that God is the source of all true wisdom and that those *In* Christ have been given the Holy Spirit, so that we might share in God’s wisdom (Cf. Isa. 11:2-3; Jn. 14:15-27, 16:4-15; Rom 12:6-8, 16:27; 1 Cor. 2:7,12, 12:4-11, 28-31; Eph. 1:17; 1 Tim. 1:17; Jude 25; Jas. 3:17). Moreover, the letter of James tells us that, “if any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God who gives generously and ungrudgingly, and he will be given it” (Jas. 1:5). Indeed, for James, it is faith-filled prayer, not Scripture alone, that gives us wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

In conclusion, there is nothing here in v. 15 that supports Luther’s linear doctrine of *sola-scripture*, but let us continue into v. 16 and see what we can find there.

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**two timothy 3:16 - part I**

“All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for refutation, for correction, and training in righteousness, so that one who belongs to God may be competent; equipped for every good work.”

I will treat the first line of this passage in the next chapter, but, for now, let us examine the remainder of the text.

The words ‘useful for’ do not equate to being interpreted as ‘sole authority for’! I have heard Protestants try to make that leaping interpretation, and it never works! It is Dead on Arrival! The good question to ask here is ‘What else is useful for’ training in righteousness?’, or ‘What else can God use to make us better witnesses of His love? The answer to these questions is that - God, who is everywhere and in everything, can use anything from anywhere to build us up if we simply remain open to His power and the possibility of God being God. More has been written in the next chapter concerning how and why we should remain open to God speaking to us through a variety of ways, and not just through Scripture-alone.

**sacred scripture denies having the sole authority**

Instead of pointing to itself as the sole source of authority, sacred Scripture points to four other sources of equal or greater authority. The first source of greater authority that Scripture points to is the Holy Trinity (the one communion of love between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) who is the authoritative source of all truth and revelation.

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The second object of authority that Scripture points to as being a source of equal authority is Tradition. St. Paul makes the authority/importance of Apostolic Tradition equal to the authority of Scripture in his second letter to the Thessalonians where he says, “Therefore, brothers, stand firm and hold fast to the traditions that you were taught, either by oral statement or by a letter of ours” (2 Thess. 2:15). The traditions that St. Paul commands us to hold fast to here unfold in the New Testament primarily under these three words:

1. Paradosis: (teachings handed down or passed down) - Cf. Mt. 15:2; Mk. 7:8; 1 Cor. 11:2; Col. 2:8; 2 Thess. 2:15, 3:16.
2. Paradidomi: (teachings handed down) - Cf. Lk. 1:1-2; 1 Cor. 11:23, 15:3; 2 Pet. 2:21; Jude 3.
3. Paralambamo: (teachings passed down) - Cf. 1 Cor. 15:1-2; Gal. 1:9, 12; 1 Thess. 2:13.

The oral statements, which are a part of the body of tradition, St. Paul tells us are distinct from what was written in the letters - this is why he writes, “. . . by oral statement or by letter of ours.” Therefore, according to the Apostle Paul, it is not Scripture alone, but rather a combination of the oral and written teachings that we are commanded to follow.

Adherents of *sola-scriptura* would disagree with the clear Scripture text in Thess. 2:15 by claiming one of two things; either that ‘Every oral teaching is now written down in the Bible’, or that ‘Paul’s command was only relevant during the Apostolic age. We now have the Bible to guide us.’ Concerning both of these silly retorts, if *sola-scriptura* is true,

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then these objections should be able to be found somewhere in the Bible. Yet, nowhere in the sacred Scripture can we find any texts that indicate that all of the oral teachings were eventually written down and are now contained in the Bible. Concerning the latter objection, nowhere in sacred Scripture is it written that St. Paul's command or the oral teachings have an expiration date. On the contrary, the Catholic Church is the preserver and propagator of all oral teachings handed down to Her by the Apostles.

The third object of authority that sacred Scripture points to as a source of greater authority is the Church. Writing to St. Timothy, St. Paul explicitly makes this fact clear, "But if I should be delayed, you should know how to behave in the household of God, which is the Church of the living God, the Pillar and Foundation of Truth" (1 Tim. 3:15). This passage alone proves Martin Luther's teaching of *sola-scriptura* to be a lie. It is not individuals who can always interpret Scripture correctly, but rather it is only the Apostolic Church, which is the Pillar and Foundation of Truth, who has been given that authority and grace by God (Cf. Mt. 16:13-19; Isa. 22:15-24; Lk. 11:52). Where is the Church that Paul helped to establish and that he calls the Pillar and Foundation of Truth? It is the Catholic Church alone who has always been with us and has always interpreted Scripture correctly through the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the Magisterium.<sup>1</sup> It is only this truly Apostolic Church that

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<sup>1</sup> The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* defines the *Magisterium* as: The living, teaching office of the Church, whose task it is to give as authentic interpretation of the word of God, whether in its written form (sacred Scripture), or in the form of Tradition. The Magisterium ensures the

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Christ Jesus said the gates of Hell would not prevail against (Cf. Mt. 16:18).

The fourth and final object of authority that sacred Scripture points to as being a source of equal or greater authority is ‘preaching’. Sacred Scripture tells us that preaching, not letters, is the primary mode of Christian evangelization and teachings:

1. The coming of the Kingdom was first preached, not written, by Jesus and His disciples (Mt. 9:35; 10:7).
2. The Apostles primary mode of evangelization and teaching after the Pentecost was preaching (Acts 2:14-37, 8:4-5, 12, 25, 9:20, 11:19-20, 14:1-18, 15:35, 20:25).

Moreover, throughout the letters of Peter and Paul, they tell us that the written and Living Word (Jesus) of God is known through preaching, for faith comes by hearing what has been preached (Cf. Rom 10:17). Even today, our primary mode of evangelization and teaching continues to be preaching from the Book that the Catholic Church canonized. Indeed, most people will hear the Bible preached long before they ever read it, and even if they never read the Bible most people will still hear it preached. Therefore, oral preaching is at least an equal authority to sacred Scripture, if only because Scripture is dependent upon it.

**scripture is not the sole authority**

To foist sacred Scripture into a position of authority over the Christian and the Church, not only makes the Bible a super

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Church’s fidelity to the teaching of the Apostles in matters of faith and morals (CCC 85, 890, 2033).

## **SCRIPTURE DOES NOT EVEN CLAIM TO BE THE SOLE AUTHORITY**

Sacrament, but it also necessarily implies that the Bible is the means to our salvation and that just is not true. Scripture itself points to many things that serve as contributing means in our salvation; such as prayer, faith, repentance, the sacrament of Baptism, the Holy Spirit, the Holy Eucharist, the Church, and several others, but it never points to itself as being the sole means of our salvation.

To prove that *sola-scriptura* is not an Apostolic teaching, all one has to do is read the three great creeds from the first four hundred years of the Church (see Appendix C) and they will see what the faithful Fathers of the Church believed to be necessary for our salvation. And guess what! Sacred Scripture is never mentioned, even though it did serve as one of the sources of wisdom that the Fathers drew from to express their beliefs in those great creeds.

### **conclusion**

We have just begun to examine the central passage of Scripture that Protestants tell us to support their belief in *sola-scriptura* and have already proved it be just one more example of Luther's bad reasoning and self-interested lies. Secondly, we have witnessed that Scripture points outward to other sources of authority for the Christian and the Church that are either greater or equal to it. Lastly, we have found that Scripture does not teach that it alone cannot save anyone alone.

Therefore, only after two chapters of critiquing *sola-scriptura*, it is already clear that according to 'Bonum ex intergra causa, malus ex quocumque defecto' the defects in *sola-scriptura* render it unworthy of belief.

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## **chapter three:**

### ***The Third Fatal Error***

#### **An Ineffectual Understanding of What the Word of God is**

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**I** have already spoken to this issue at some length in the *Cooperating with God* series, and I will draw and expound from much of that same material in this chapter. I will follow that up with my concluding treatment of 2 Timothy 3:16.

#### **the evolution of the bible**

Christ Jesus did not send the Bible, in and of itself, to be our sole authority, but, rather He sent us the Holy Spirit and the Apostles and their successors to guide us towards all truth (Cf. Lk. 6:13; Jn. 14:26, 16:13, 21:15-1; CCC 880-896). While the Apostles were alive they taught us in the same oral fashion as they received from the Lord (Cf. 2 Tim. 1:13-14, 2:2; Rom. 6:17, 2 Tim 3:16-17; 1 Cor 11:2, 23, 15:1-3; 2 Cor. 3:3-6). As the Church expanded and the Apostles and other eyewitnesses began to die, it became necessary for the early Catholic Church to make a written record of the good news of Christ Jesus and to preserve what had already been written.

It was the Holy Spirit, working *through* sacred Tradition, who inspired the Catholic Church to establish one canon (Gk. *kanon*, meaning 'order' or 'list') of sacred Scripture. By the mid-fourth century, there were a number of unofficial canons of Scripture that were being used throughout the

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Catholic Churches, and nearly all of them were slightly different from the other. By the authority of his *Decree of Damascus* in 382 C.E., at the Fourth Council of Rome, Pope St. Damascus I, adopted St. Athanasius's of Alexandria, 367 C.E. listing of 27 books that today we call the New Testament, along with the 46 books of the Septuagint Hebrew Bible, into One Canon of sacred Scripture.<sup>1</sup>

The primary impetus for the canonization of sacred Scripture seems to have come from two sources: First, from the competing religions, such as the Gnostics and Montanist, who were pointing to their own scriptures to support their heretical teachings; and second, there seemed to have been a growing desire for greater liturgical unity in the Church. It is important to point out there that there was no impetus in the Church to canonize Scripture so that Scripture alone could be made the Church's sole authority.

Therefore, we are in error and perform a great injustice when we reduce the word of God to having a birth date of only as far back as the fourth century. Again, because Protestantism is a *post-biblica* religion, the father's of their church was endowed with every freedom to start their own

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<sup>1</sup> The complete list of the Canonical Books of both Testaments was given not only at the aforementioned council of Rome, but also at the Council of Hippo (393), the Third Council of Carthage (419), in the Gelasian Decree of Pope St. Gelasius I (papacy, 492-496), and at the Ecumenical Council of Florence (1438-1445). The Ecumenical Council of Trent, in light of new dissenting Protestant teachings, defined the complete Canon of Old and New Testaments of the Bible on April 8, 1546. The fact that this issue was not raised at any of the early Ecumenical Councils is evidence that the canon of Scripture was not a point of disagreement amongst Catholic Christians, but only visited as a result of the Protestant reformulation of Apostolic teaching.

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religion and decree the Catholic Bible to be their sole source of authority, just as Muhammad was free to start a new religion and declare the *Qur'an* to be the sole source of authority for all Muslims. Yet, that being said, it remains to be a Fatal Error for Protestants to point to the Catholic Bible and claim that it teaches *sola-scriptura* when it does not! Just as it is a Fatal Error for Muslims to point to the Catholic Bible and claim that Moses and Jesus foretold the coming of the prophet Muhammad when they did not!

If you want to know the authentic interpretation of any book, you have to get it directly from its author. As Mary gave birth to the Word in the Flesh and is the authentic witness of His whole human life, so did Mother Church gives birth to the written word and is its authentic interpreter and witness.

**the triune nature of sacred scripture**

It is not an exaggeration to call the Church, Sacred Scripture, and sacred Tradition as being *Triune* in their very nature.

In the Church (the Body of Christ) we see the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, Christ Jesus, who always existed and, also like Christ, is always moving towards becoming truly one with God the Father (Cf. 1 Cor. 15:28). From the Christ, Himself did the New Covenant Catholic Church and Her priesthood receive the authority to be all that She claims to be (Cf. Mt. 16:18-19; Mt. 18:15-17; Jn. 20:19-23).

In sacred Tradition, we see the First Person of the Holy Trinity, God the Father; in that sacred Tradition is that which is deposited and handed down orally, as the Father deposits in each of His creatures what they need to glorify

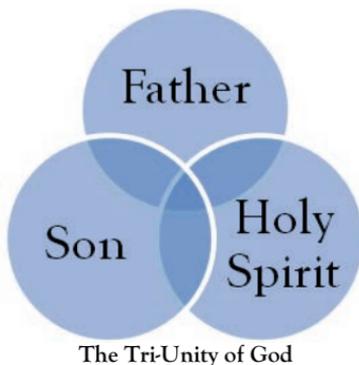
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Him and accomplish His will. It is he who spoke orally to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, commanding them how to live rightly before Him. Sacred Tradition is the color of the fiber that binds all of history and the experiences of each child of God together in one seamless continuum. In other words, sacred Tradition is the mediated consequence of Holy Love.

In sacred Scripture, we see the Third Person of the Holy Trinity, the Holy Spirit, who inspired man to pass down the oral Traditions and eventually to write them down, and later to canonize them into one collection. Even in this abbreviated explanation, we see how the Three (Church, Tradition, and Scripture) are one (Cf. 1 Jn. 5:7), how they all agree (Cf. 1 Jn. 5:8), how they are all in and apart of one each other (the same substance) (Cf. Jn. 14:10-11), and how none of them exist rightly divided or contrary to one another.

All Sacred Scripture was written by, to, and for the Church. Therefore, it is not Scripture alone, but Scripture within and through the lenses of Tradition and the living understanding of the Church. “Therefore, brothers, stand firm and hold fast to the traditions that you were taught, either by oral statement or by a letter of ours” (2 Thess. 2:15). Nothing in the life with Christ is solitary - it is always communal. Consider the diagram below:

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We, humans, have had a long history of trying to isolate and/or remove the persons of the Holy Trinity from the community, and every time that it has happened it has always resulted in a heresy being committed. When God the Son was removed from the community of God, it resulted in Arianism, Islam, and Jehovah's Witnesses. Likewise, when the authority of the Church was removed from the community of Divine Revelation, it resulted in disunity in the Body of Christ, heretical teachings, and tens of thousands of unscriptural denominations.

### **getting to know God through His full Word**

Contrary to Protestant opinion, the Bible is not the only authentic source of divine revelation. What the Bible is - is a divinely inspired reporting of various revelatory experiences from many different people, over a wide range of centuries, along with some interpretations of those experiences.

Books and written words allow for the possibility of the brain to accomplish four things: (1) Obtain knowledge; (2) Form Thoughts and Opinions; (3) Form Hypothesis; and (4) Form Theories. Yet, until these four things encounter reality,

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through the tests of firsthand experience, they all remain to be ineffective and inadequate in dealing with real-life situations. The irony of sacred Scripture is that it is full of stories of people who took the time to *experience* life with God; people who failed and got back up with His help. Since all faithful Jews devoted themselves to the study of Scripture, they also understood that to *Cooperate with God* they had to leave the book and go be *used* by Him. Indeed, the path to sainthood is tied to the path of experiencing God in the *Life with the Cross*.

God not only reveals Himself through the Bible but also through anything that He so desires to reveal Himself through. It was not Scripture, but, rather, it was God Himself who condescended to give Samuel a revelation concerned Eli, and this occurred in a day when “revelation of the Lord was uncommon and vision infrequent” (1 Sam. 3:1). The Prophet Isaiah said the child born of the virgin would be named Immanuel (Cf. Isa. 7:14), but Joseph must have believed the words of the angel of the Lord in his dream to be more authoritative than Scripture because he named the child ‘Jesus’. In fact, Joseph went on to have three other authoritative dreams, as recorded in Matthew (Cf. Mt. 1:18 - 2:23) that saved the life of the Lord. It was angels, not the Bible, who announced the coming of Savior to St. Mary and the shepherds (Cf. Lk. 1:26-38; 2:15-20). The Scriptures did not tell John the Baptist who he was, nor did it tell him that his cousin was the Lamb of God (Cf. Jn. 1:29-34). The Bible did not brief Simeon or the prophetess Anna about who that infant at the Temple was (Cf. Lk. 2:25-38). It was not through the Bible that the disciples, on the road to Emmaus,

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came to know Jesus as risen, but, rather, it was through the Breaking of Bread (Cf. Lk. 24:1-33). It was a vision, not Scripture, that revealed God's plan concerning the gentiles to St. Peter (Cf. Acts. 10:9-49). According to Acts and Galatians, St. Paul was not converted by reading the New Testament (Cf. Acts 9:19). More importantly, Jesus did not command His Apostles to write a New Testament or canonize a Bible.

My protesting friend Ezekiel would always protest against these examples by saying that, "All dreams, visions, and revelations must be authenticated against Scripture." That sounds reasonable, but the truth of the matter is that Scripture does not say that all dreams, visions, and revelations must be authenticated against Scripture. Moreover, Joseph would not have been able to name his son Jesus if he had to first authenticate it against Scripture. Because *sola-scriptura* teaches that Scripture is the sole source of authority for the Christian and the Church, the only way to hold that all dreams, visions, and revelations must be authenticated against Scripture is if Scripture says that they must. That is, by definition, *sola-scriptura* must hold that on whatever issues on which Scripture is silent it (Scripture) holds no authority.

Ezekiel would then point to the historical example of the Bereans in Acts, who "examined the scriptures daily to determine whether" the teachings that they were receiving from Paul and Silas were true (Cf. Acts 17:10-12), as his proof that the Bible teaches *sola-scriptura*. There are two serious Fatal Errors that he is guilty of here. First, we cannot isolate and take Luke's historical writings concerning the actions of the Apostles and turn them into Christian doctrines. For

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example, Luke also records several instances of new converts speaking in tongues after they had received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Those historical events do not warrant the creation of a doctrine that teaches that a person is not saved until they have spoken in tongues.

When I was pre-school, in about 1976, Bridget Woods solicited my presence into the closet with her, where she then proceeded to press her lips against mine. It is true that when we were in high school - she at John F. Kennedy Catholic High and me at Warren G. Harding - it was my secret desire that Bridget would corrupt me again, but the fact of the matter is that historical events do not always repeat, neither should we expect them to, no matter how bad that we wish that they would. Therefore, we should never create a Christian doctrine based upon an isolated historical event.

Second, because these Bereans were Jews, and Paul and Silas were teaching in a synagogue, it is very likely that the Apostles were interpreting the Hebrew Scriptures in the same way that the books of *Matthew* and *Hebrews* do for their Jewish audience; that is, to make the case for Jesus of Nazareth being the long-awaited Messiah whose coming the prophets foretold. That these Jews left the synagogue and authenticated the Apostle's interpretation against that which they were interpreting, does not mean that Scripture alone is the sole source of authority for the Christian and the Church. What other source document would they have verified Paul's and Silas' interpretation than from the very same source that the Apostles had interpreted? What if these Jews had used the writings of Plato to determine if what Paul and Silas were saying was true? Would Plato's writings then

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be the sole source of authority? This is a very important question I am asking here, because after Paul and Silas left Beroea they went to Athens, where, in the Areopagus, Paul appealed not to the Hebrew Scriptures to prove his message about Jesus Christ; rather, he appealed to an idol of an “Unknown God” to make his case and, through which, some Athenians came to believe (Cf. Acts 17:16-34). Now, this isolated historical event does not warrant the creation of a new Christian doctrine that teaches that ‘Strange-idols-alone are the sole source of authority for the Christian and the Church’!

If humanity can see God in the Bible, but not in nature, then the results are always reckless deforestation, dams, and landfills. If humanity can see God in the Bible, but not in the animals, then the results are always zoos, pet ‘ownership’, and sport hunting. If humanity can see God in the Bible, but not in His special presence in their neighbor, then the results are always objectification, manipulation, idolatry, slavery, prostitution, war, genocide, euthanasia, abortion, and capital punishment. “Be doers of the word and not hearers only, deluding yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror. He sees himself, then goes off and promptly forgets what he looked like” (Jas. 1:22).

A Christian who is in protest against the Catholic Church would interpret ‘word’ as being the Catholic Bible (excluding seven books). In contrast, Catholics know the word of God as being the visible and invisible manifestation of His love and grace. In other words, the word of God is evident in all that we see in His visible creation and what our

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eyes cannot perceive in the Heavens. The word of God cannot be contained, enslaved, or micromanaged by any human expression or device (i.e. print, thought, art, imagination, media, language, and etcetera), because it (the Divine word) is far beyond and more perfect than anything that we could fully understand. “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord” (Isa 55:8).

To have only a portion of sacred Scripture (as the protesting church does) and no sacred Tradition or an authoritative Church, is the Old Covenant equivalent to having only some of the Written Law (the Decalogue) and none of the Oral Law or a Temple. This is the ineffectual position that the protesting church finds itself in and the reason why it will continue to divide into more and more unscriptural denominations.

When I was a sola-scriptura, sola-fide, ‘absolute predestination’, ‘name-it claim-it’ believing protestor, all of the theories and opinions of my teachers resonated as being the truth and I accepted them as such. Yet, when I began to encounter the suffering in life, none of these ‘truths’ held up (they all failed the test), and when I began to encounter the Triune person of God, they no longer even resonated as being true, because I had come face to face with the *real* Spirit of Truth, the Holy Spirit, the indwelling of God. In contrast, one thing that I found in Catholicism is that it is impossible to get spiritually stuck because the Church is overflowing with so many ways to draw nearer to God.

It has been my unhappy chance to have met so many Protestants who have not experienced any spiritual growth

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since their first conversion experience, and the reason for this sad state of theirs' is because their path to know God is very limited and linear. God has given all of us the fullness of His love in the Catholic Church and the Holy Sacraments, but some voluntarily reject it and then wonder why they are spiritually stuck. That is comparable to cutting off your legs and getting to the gates of Heaven and having to hear St. Peter tell you that you are too short for admission.

To know God only through the written word is like a man knowing his wife only through a book written about her by her friends. That would be a great start, but inadequate to what can be learned about her by truly experiencing her through communing with her in dialogue and taking her body (her total essence) into his. This is the opportunity that God has offered His children through prayer and the Holy Sacraments of the Catholic Church.

I am not saying that only Catholics have the Holy Spirit, or that we are greater than those who are members of the 'Cult of the Bible'. What I am saying is that, to the degree that a child of God remains a child and does not restrict how God desires to speak to him/her, they are freer and better enabled to *Cooperate with God* as they ought. What I *am* saying, is that Catholics are obviously more miserable in this life, because we cannot turn to something created in this world to solve our problems. We have to rely on the Holy Spirit to guide us towards all truth, through whatever means, persons, or devices He decides to use, *if* He chooses to at all. He *may* decide just to be with us through the suffering, rather than to take us out of it.

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To fully live in the word of God, one has to remain open to the possibility of discovering God everywhere and in everything. In all things that God has created, you can discover the mystery of His plan and purpose for your life. God is truly everywhere and in everything (Cf. Ps. 139:7-10) and to see the presence of God everywhere and in every 'thing' is to be free to respond to His presence everywhere and through every 'thing'. The rich opportunity to find truth *and* to be tempted into error exist, both, in what God created with His own word and in the word that men were inspired to write in their own language.

I challenge anyone to consider these words, which are some of the synonyms of the true meaning of the word of God; they are: Love, Truth, Empowering, and Transforming. It is true that whenever these four words occur within or through us, it was a definite happy chance for the common will of God to be achieved on earth. We must always believe that Holy encounters with the word of God come to pass not only when we understand sacred Scripture, but also at every second of the day when the grace of God presents to us an opportunity for one conversion experience after another through Holy Love, Holy Truth, Holy Empowerment, and Holy Transformation.

Getting to know God through Scripture is a great start, but until you take up your Cross and begin your journey to Mount Calvary, you will not truly know anything about who God truly is, how much He loves you, or who you are in relation to Him.

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**two timothy 3:16 - part II**

“All Scripture is inspired by God”

Some Protestant theologians will point to 2 Timothy 3:16 and say that the keywords there are not those that I have already dismissed in the previous chapter, but, rather, it is the fact that “God breathed” out Scripture is why it is the sole source of authority.

This argument is a rather weak one because it hinges on the cumbersome translation of the Greek word *theopneustos* (a very rare word) being rendered in English “God breathed”, rather than the equally cumbersome translation “inspired by God” that most, ancient and modern, translations have so rendered it. Even though *theopneustos* does not translate or transliterate well into English, let us continue to examine how this word undermines this third Fatal Error of *sola-scriptura*.

*Theopneustos* is composed of *theo* (supreme God) and *pneustos* from *pneo* (to breathe hard). *Theopneustos* is found only once in the New Testament, never in the Septuagint, and only four other times in the extant Greek writings. Some think that *theopneustos* was a word coined by the author of 2 Timothy to distinctly highlight the Divine origin of the Hebrew Scriptures.<sup>2</sup>

In the first place, keeping 2 Timothy in context, let us now redress the fact that the Scripture that Paul is saying that God inspired/*theopneustos* was the Hebrew Scriptures and not the New Testament, some of which had not even been written by

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<sup>2</sup> The New Jerome Bible Commentary. 65:9-16. Prentice Hall: Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey (1990).

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the time of this letter. Notwithstanding that, let us now spend some time examining whether this one passage (“All Scripture is inspired/*theopneustos* by God”) can be authentically interpreted to mean or infer that ‘Scripture is the sole source of authority for the Christian and the Church’.

Remember, the interpretation of these six words of 2 Timothy 3:16 serves as the cornerstone of the Protestant doctrine of *sola-scriptura*. When this interpretation is proven to be in error, the entire system of theology, upon which Protestantism has been built, comes crashing down on top of itself. Their interpretative position is clearly stated as follows: ‘Because all Scripture is *theopneustos*, that means that all Scripture comes from the highest authority (God). Therefore, having come from that authority, Scripture must be naturally and equally endowed with the unique and indelible authoritative mark and grace of its sole author.’ On the surface, this interpretative position sounds compelling, but again, it all hinges on what I will prove to be a very weak and poorly contextualized understanding of the word *theopneustos*.

Concerning the transmission of Divine revelation, there are a number of problems that arise with this particularly Calvinistic understanding of *theopneustos* and how Scripture was written. In the first place, it reduced the human author of Scripture to being nothing but a dictation machine and, indeed, that door is riddled with hundreds of inconsistencies and problems of its own that even John Calvin himself (1509-64) had to acknowledge.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> *Institutes of the Christian Religion* 2.11.6. (1559).

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Concerning the matter of translation, again, *theopneustos* is a compound word, from *theo* ('supreme God') and *pneo* ('breathe hard'). On its own, *pneo* is used only twice in the New Testament to refer to 'wind/air' (Cf. Acts 27:40, 28:13). Although, the more common use of *pneo*, which is sure to help us to understand the author's intent in combining it with *theo*, is the word *pneuma* (Holy Spirit), in which *pneo* serves as its root. *Pneuma* is used primarily and throughout the New Testament when speaking of the Spirit of God.

Putting *theopneustos* back together in English in this new light, the new translation that what we come up with is, "the Supreme God's Spirit." The beauty of this play on words is further unfurled once we remember who God has given a share of His Spirit to seek His wisdom. In other words, Scripture is God's wisdom from the Spirit, written by a man of the Spirit. Additionally, when we recall that the Spirit is man's source of every gift of God through which he gives himself back to God as a gift, this passage becomes even more transcendently beautiful. All Scripture (Divine revelation) is God's gift to man from the Spirit and written by a man in the Spirit. In other words, sacred Scripture is the reciprocal gift that keeps on giving.

### **two timothy 3:16 - part III**

"God breathed Scripture"

Again, the translation of the word *theopneustos* into the English 'inspired' is a fairly good, though cumbersome, rendering of the meaning and spirit of what the author was trying to communicate with it. Likewise, the translation 'God breathed' is also a fairly decent, though obtuse,

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rendering of the literal meaning of the consolidated words *theo* ('the Supreme God') and *pneo* ('breathe hard').

In part II I highlighted some of the problems that both of these renderings have when the word *pneo* is reattached to *Pneuma* ('Holy Spirit'). In this section, I will digress back to the concept of God's 'breath' and discuss whether, by virtue of God breathing Scripture, does that automatically infer/bestow 'sole source of authority over the Christian and the Church' on Scripture.

One of my favorite things about Catholic theology is that, because of its Biblical continuity and depth, it hardly ever needs to embrace the either/or approach to Scriptural interpretation. Catholics are free to nuance their understanding of much of sacred Scripture with an and/both approach, and this allows us to have a much broader understanding of the Bible, as well a natural openness to the possibility of God being God because we never pigeonhole ourselves in the linear theology that so many of our protesting sisters and brothers fall into.

If Protestants believe that sacred Scripture is the sole source of authority over the Christian and the Church, by virtue of God breathing it, then they must remain consistent in this belief. That is, everything that God breathes, or breathes into, or breathes on, must also have been given to be the sole source of authority over the Christian and the Church. Yet, if we can find any other time in Scripture where God did breathe something, or breathe into something, or onto something, then that would contradict *sola-scriptura* because there cannot be two or more sole authorities.

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The doctrine of *sola-scriptura* is somewhat consistent with the pervasive Calvinist belief in the total depravity of humankind. That is, with sacred Scripture being the sole source of authority for the Christian and the Church, it impairs the depraved and fallible man from corrupting the truth. That belief serves as the foundation of their belief in God ‘dictating’ Scripture to man for him to write, because, again, man himself, because of his total depravity, could not have been merely inspired to write Scripture in the same way that an artist or a dancer is inspired in their respective crafts. This extremely anti-humanistic theology is consistent with the rest of Calvin’s teaching, which is usually expressed under the acronym TULIP, where freewill (as Catholics know it) is something that humans do not have.<sup>4</sup> This is one of the reasons why the famed Catholic convert and author Gilbert

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<sup>4</sup> The core teachings of Calvinism are traditionally summarized through the acronym TULIP, which are: **T**otal Depravity means that man cannot respond to God’s offer of salvation due to their will (in fact, their whole being) has been rendered incapable by humanities ‘Original Sin’ (cf. Rom. 3:9-10, 8:7-8; 2 Cor. 4:4). Man must first be regenerated by the Holy Spirit before he can respond by faith - Baptism has no regenerative effects on the soul. **U**nconditional election, means that God has predetermined to elect some souls to salvation and others to damnation - not because of anything they may or may not have done in life, but merely according to His own sovereign will (cf. Acts 13:48; Rom. 9; Eph 1:3-6). **L**imited atonement means that Christ died only for the sins of the church, but not for the whole world (cf. Jn. 10:15; Mk. 10:45; Rev. 5:9). **I**rresistible grace means that those God has predetermined to elect *cannot* resist the Holy Spirit’s draw to salvation - that man cannot reject God’s mercy if God deigns to forgive a soul of its sins, without that soul first asking (Jn. 6:44; 1 Cor. 1:23-24; Acts 16:14). **P**erseverance of the saints means that by God’s power, those He predetermined to elect will endure in faith to the end (cf. Jn. 10:28; Rom. 8:30; Phil. 1:6).

## **AN INEFFECTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT THE WORD OF GOD IS**

K. Chesterton (1874-1936), in his *Eugenics and Other Evils*, called Calvinism “the most non-Christian of Christian systems.”

Inasmuch as there may be some interpreted consistency in some of Protestant theology, the matter of sole authority being bestowed upon sacred Scripture, by virtue of God breathing it, is a sophistic argument. Moreover, it is not consistent with all of Scripture!

Let us take *Genesis* 2:7 as our first example of the inconsistency found in *sola-scripture*: “The Lord God formed man out of the clay ground and blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and so man became a living being.” If Scripture is the sole source of authority by virtue of God breathing it, then how much more sole authority does man have? God breathed into his nostrils! If God’s breath makes Scripture the sole source of authority, then how much more authority does man’s breath have, given that God gave him the “breath of life”? Man is just as much, if not more, God breathed as Scripture is.

Calvinists will respond to this by saying that this was man’s state before humanities’ ‘Original Sin’, and due to the fall, man lost all of his natural grace that may or may not have included this creative authority.

That retort would work if the *Gospel of John* did not say that, “The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. “Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” And when He said this He breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them and whose sins you retain are retained” (Jn. 20:20-23). If Scripture is the sole source of

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authority by virtue of God breathing it, then how much more sole authority do the Apostles and their successor have? God breathed directly on and into them! If God's breath makes Scripture the sole source of authority, then how much more authority does the Apostle's breath have, given that God gave them His own "breath of life"? The Apostles are just as much, if not more, God breathed as Scripture is. God's breath is what gives authority.

**conclusion**

Now, in this much clearer light, we can better see the Fatal Errors in the Protestant order of authority. Sacred Scripture has never been a sole authority unto itself, rather, from the very beginning, Scripture has been a cooperative venture between God and man. Through the Spirit, God has shared His Divine wisdom, and His prophets and Apostles (down through the centuries) have shared these Divine truths through oral teaching and letters (Cf. 2 Thess 2:15).

In this new age, it has been the Church, the Pillar and Foundation of Truth (Cf. 1 Tim. 3:15) who has been the repository, articulator, and preservationist of these Divine truths that Christ Jesus had deigned to share with His chosen Apostles before His Ascension to the right hand of His Father in Heaven. From the Apostles, these truths, in love, have been passed down orally and in writing from age to age and from generation to generation and will continue to be until the end of time.

The truth is not an object or a hard thing to be grasped! The truth is a person and His name is Christ Jesus. He started one Church through His Apostles and today that

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Church is known as the Catholic Church, the true Church of Christ. It is One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic, with the successors to St. Peter, the chief of the Apostles, as the Bishop of Rome (the Supreme Pontiff, the Pope).

The Catholic Church is the only Church on the face of the earth that can authentically claim to be founded by the Apostles of Jesus Christ and them alone. All other churches were founded by some man or woman, and none earlier than just a few hundred years ago. It does not make any sense, whatsoever, for any Christian to belong to any other Church than the one that Christ Jesus founded through His Apostles and has remained without error on faith and morals from the beginning!



## chapter four:

### *The Fourth Fatal Error*

#### **Scripture does not even say *what* Scripture is**

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**G**iven that *sola-scriptura* teaches that Scripture is the sole source of authority for the Christian and the Church, one should reasonably expect for Scripture to tell us what it consists of. Yet, despite that reasonable expectation, what we have seen so far out of this theology is that it is ironically and consistently unbiblical. The same sad record of accomplishment holds to be true in this Fourth Fatal Error as well.

The question is this - ‘How do we know that our twenty-seven books of the New Testament are inspired by God and that they are the only ones written by the Apostles or the only ones inspired by God?’

If *sola-scriptura* is true, then at least one of the books of the Bible should have a list of all inspired Scripture. That is to say, that in the light of Scripture being the sole source of authority, it should be authoritative on this extremely vital issue and announce itself in this way, “I am Scripture and I consist of the following books.” If the Bible does have an inspired text of Scripture to announce or declare what Scripture consists of, how do we know what Scripture is? In other words, according to the specious doctrine of *sola-scriptura*, no other authority can authorize Scripture unless Scripture, the sole source for the Christian and the Church, tells the Christian and the Church what Scripture is. In fewer words, according to *sola-scriptura*, there is no other

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authority that can tell us what Scripture is unless Scripture itself tells us.

This request for Scripture to tell us what Scripture consists of is not extraordinary. Given that sacred Scripture goes out of its way to give us a list of sons of Noah, Abraham, David, and etcetera, a list of Commandments, a list of the tribes of Israel, a list of kings of Judah and Israel, and a list of Apostles, why should we not expect for Scripture to provide us with a list of books of the Bible if the Bible is truly the sole source of authority for the Christian and the Church?

### **the blind following the non-existent**

There was a man who everyone thought was married because he would walk around town all day, telling everyone that his wife was his boss and how he couldn't do anything unless he asked her for permission first.

One day, a police officer pulled this man over for speeding and asked him to step out of the car. In response, the man said, "I can't leave my car unless my wife tells me to." The police officer, being a good and patient soul, then politely requested that the man call his wife on his cellular phone and ask her for permission.

To with the man replied, "I can't."

"Why not?" the officer asked.

"I don't know who my wife is!" the man retorted.

"What do you mean sir?" the officer persisted, "I thought you said that you are married."

"No, no officer," the man replied, "You see officer, I had a very good father, and one day I asked him when I was still a young boy, how could I grow up to be a good man like him.

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He told me that if I really wanted to be a good man then I should do everything that my wife tells me to do. I then asked my father who my wife is and he told me that she is out there somewhere and that I will know who she is as soon as I see her. So, I've been waiting around for her ever since, and boy will I be glad when I find her because I really need her to tell me what to do so that I can become a good man like my father was."

Protestants who believe in *sola-scriptura* are just like the man in this story. They say that they believe in the Bible alone, but they can never be absolutely certain about what books the Bible consists of because the Bible alone does not tell them. It is not good enough for them to just accept the twenty-seven books of the New Testament that the Catholic Church declared were inspired by God, because the Church did not use Scripture to make that decision and, according to them, the Catholic Church is fallible.

Honest Protestants, who have knowledge of the history of the Church, will admit that all Christians have the Catholic Church to thank for canonizing and preserving the Scriptures down through the centuries. Yet, in their moment of honesty, they contradict their own doctrine of *sola-scriptura*. How could it be that the Bible is the sole source of authority, but it was the Church that authorized Scripture? Moreover, if the Church did not canonize the Bible until 382 C.E., then what was the sole source of authority for Christians and the Church before that? Were they without any authority? What gave the Church the authority to canonize the Bible if there was not a Bible to give it authority? If the Church did have *pre-biblica* authority then why would the Church canonize the

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Bible and then relinquish its authority to an object that does not speak and whose texts need to be rightly interpreted to be understood?

In a similar comparison, if a Deacon were to ordain a Priest we would say that they must be equal in authority, or if a tax collector swore in the new President of the country, we would say that they must belong to equal branches of government. These things sound out of order, do they not? Then why would we say that the Church, who wrote, preserved, and authorized the Bible is now subject to it? It makes no sense whatsoever.

There are no sound answers to any of these questions. If inspired Scripture said exactly what books the Bible consists of, then I would agree that Scripture is self-authorized and self-authoritative, but it does not. This is another reason why I say that *sola-scriptura* was Dead on Arrival.

### **the protestant canon will never be closed**

It may seem like a peculiar thing to suggest that books can still be added to and taken out of the Protestant Bible today, but that is the truth. Indeed, because sacred Scripture does not tell us what books sacred Scripture consists of nothing is stopping any protesting community from ever amending the Bible. In fact, Martin Luther, the father of Protestantism and *sola-scriptura* himself, placed the books of Esther, Hebrews, James, Jude, and Revelation in the appendix of the Bible he translated into German (1522) and even went so far as to call James "an epistle of straw," and held even harsher comments for the book of Revelation, saying that he could "in no way detect that the Holy Spirit produced it."

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If the father of Protestantism and *sola-scriptura* felt justified in amending the canon of sacred Scripture that the Catholic Church had been using since 382 C.E., then what is stopping any other Protestant Christian from doing the same right now?

This is not just a rhetorical question that I am asking here. On the contrary, I was just setting up my next question: That is, who gave Luther, the translators of the King James Bible, and successive others the authority to replace the Septuagint (the Old Testament that Christians have always used) with a list of books that some Jewish rabbis, who were also likely anti-Christians, compiled (commonly called the Jamnia Council canon) decades after the death of Christ Jesus? If *sola-scriptura* was not their source of authority for altering sacred Scripture then what was? Moreover, what is stopping more Protestants from drawing from that same wellspring of mystical authority to modify the canon of Scripture again?

### **conclusion**

In summary, there were two deadly blows made against *sola-scriptura* in this chapter. First, the fact that the Church had the authority to write and canonize the Bible, necessarily implies that it is an equal (if not greater) authority to that which it wrote and authorized. Secondly, if Scripture is infallible, as *sola-scriptura* holds, then the Church must be infallible too, for a fallible cause cannot produce an infallible effect.

There is no recovery from this Fatal Error. Again, *sola-scriptura* was Dead on Arrival.



## chapter five:

### *The Fifth Fatal Error*

#### **Too Many Inauthentic Interpreters & Too Many Inauthentic Interpretations**

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**S**ola-scriptura teaches that by using reason and prayer alone, anyone can interpret Scripture correctly. If this is true, then it raises another fatal contradiction. For, if Scripture is the sole source of authority for the Christian and the Church then why would Scripture need an agent other than itself to interpret it? That is, if Scripture is truly its own authority, then it should always be able to interpret itself without any human help or interference - the meaning of every text should be as plain as day, without the need for any human interpretation.

Scriptural interpretation, by definition, expounds upon Scripture by drawing out and explaining its implied meaning. Interpretations, as such, are Scriptural, but they are not sacred Scripture, and this is a terrible contradiction in Protestant theology. For when an interpretation of Scripture is made and that interpretation becomes a doctrine, a conflict thus ensues.

This is the immediate question that this error presents: 'Which has sole authority over the Christian and the Church at this point? The Scripture-alone or the Doctrine interpreted from Scripture through the aid of human prayer and reason?' If we say that Scripture is still the sole source of authority then that means that no doctrine drawn from Scripture can be binding upon the Christian or the Church. For example, say the pastor of Bedside Baptist church were to read, "After

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Lydia and her household had been Baptized. . . . (Acts 16:15)” and interpreted ‘household’ to mean that all adults and children in the household were Baptized, and, from that, formulated a doctrine on the necessity of infant Baptism in his church. If that were to happen, I imagine that some members of the Bedside Baptist church would disagree with the pastor’s interpretation. Yet, it clearly says in Scripture that ‘Lydia’s whole household was Baptized’, does it not?

As members of the congregation, could they refuse not to have their household Baptized? If Scripture alone is the sole source of authority, then what Scripture could they use to justify their disobedience? Is there an issue of disobedience? If Scripture is the sole source of authority, then what authority does the pastor have to order that his congregation have their whole household Baptized? Should not Scripture clearly command it? If a woman in the congregation disagrees with the pastor’s interpretation how do we know who is right? Both of them, the pastor and the woman, applied reason and prayed and came up with two different interpretations of Acts 16:15. Whose interpretation is true?

**too many inauthentic interpretations**

Back in the 1960s, in the United States of America, there was an enterprising young salesman who traveled around the country selling condoms. One nice summer day he happened to roll into a small town in the great state of Texas and set up shop in the middle of downtown. Before the morning was over, the whole town had heard about the traveling condom salesman and they all came out, men and women, to receive his free samples. The salesman asked

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them to take the condom samples home to try them out and, if they liked them, to come back the next day and buy as many as they wanted.

Some local religious leaders were the least bit pleased about the young man corrupting the good people of their town with this means of artificial birth control. So, the next morning, as all the townsfolk were gathering around the sales display again, a local Presbyterian preacher stood upon a conveniently placed soapbox and began railing against the condom seller and all those who had come out to buy them. He commanded the people to drop whatever they had bought, and for the condom peddler to get out of town by high noon.

Someone in the back of the condemned crowd yelled out to the preacher, "Preacher-man, by what authority do you say that we are sinning?" Waving his black leather Bible in the air, the preacher said, "By the authority of the Bible alone I say these things!" This excited the crowd greatly! They all yelled back to the preacher, "We have all read those same verses and we do not interpret them as you do!" The town's sheriff happened to be there in the crowd that morning. Fearing that mob violence was about to erupt, he took his pistol out of its holder and shot the preacher in the head, killing him, for causing a mass panic.

Not an hour later did the local Catholic priest take to the same fated soapbox and also commanded the townsfolk to repent for what they had done by buying condoms, and ordered the young salesman to leave their town by high noon. The crowd became highly agitated again at the words of the priest. The same man from the back of the crowd

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yelled, “Father, by what authority do you say that we are sinning?” Waving his black leather Bible in the air, the priest yelled back, “By the authority of the Catholic Church who interprets the same Bible that She wrote.”

Hearing these words, the whole crowd dropped all of their newly purchased condoms to the ground and turned to go home. The local sheriff, who had just earlier shot the Presbyterian preacher, pulled out his pistol again and shot the condom salesman in the head, killing him, for causing a mass panic. The sheriff then turned to the priest and asked, “So, Father, what does the Catholic Church teach about capital punishment?”

In the Catholic Church, no one person has the authority to interpret Scripture or define doctrine for the entire Church. That responsibility belongs to the Magisterium, which is the communion of all Catholic Bishops, who, together with the Pope (the Bishop of Rome), form the living teaching office of the Church. It is their task to give an authentic interpretation of the word of God, whether in its written form (Sacred Scripture) or the form of sacred Tradition, with the Holy Spirit. The Magisterium thus ensures the Church’s fidelity to the teaching of the Apostles in matters of faith and morals. This is how the Catholic Church has always maintained Her strict unity and consistency of one faith and doctrine - just as Scripture demands of us, “one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all” (Eph. 4:5-6).

**too many inauthentic interpreters**

## **TOO MANY INAUTHENTIC INTERPRETERS & TOO MANY INAUTHENTIC INTERPRETATIONS**

This is in stark contrast to the Protestant movement, whose doctrine seems to change with the wind. Protestants disagreeing with Protestants on faith and morals. Various Lutherans, Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, Pentecostals, and etcetera, all teaching competing doctrines between the groups and even within their same group. Indeed, even while each of them is using the same Bible and claiming to be interpreting the Bible through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, reason, and prayer.

All of these Protestant movements claim that Scripture alone is the sole source of authority for the Christian and the Church, but they all attend their respective conferences every year or two and vote on what their denomination will teach on faith and morals. Is surgical abortion a sin? Is embryo research a sin? What about in-vitro fertilization? Is capital punishment morally evil? Are divorce and remarriage permitted? Can practicing homosexuals be ordained? Can women be ordained bishops? Is assisted suicide a sin?

Because the Bible does not specifically or clearly address any of these important issues in modern society, the Church must have just one authentic interpreter of the Bible to definitively answer these questions. The Catholic Church has that authentic and authoritative interpreter in the Magisterium. In contrast, in the Protestant churches, one-year abortion may be voted to be forbidden, but at the next conference, they may vote to allow it. This shifting sand underneath the Protestant foundation was caused by *sola-scriptura*. More than that, it is inadequate and scandalous! If God is the Truth and Truth does not change, why is Protestantism so shifty?

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Because the Protestant movement rejects the authority of the True Apostolic Church, they leave themselves vulnerable to Satan and his lies. Even Martin Luther saw the fruit of his lie flourish during his lifetime, as many of his fellow ‘so-called’ reformers began to break on doctrine with him and with each other and began starting their protest against the Catholic Church and, yes, against other protesting movements. Over the past five centuries, their splits and factions have multiplied to thousands upon thousands of protesting communities worldwide.

### **conclusion**

The two great Apostles of the Catholic Church spoke well on the Fatal Errors that can occur when individuals interpret Scripture apart from the protection that Christ Jesus affords His True Church.

“For the time will come when people will not tolerate sound doctrine but, following their desires and insatiable curiosity, will accumulate teachers and will stop listening to the truth and will be diverted to myths” (2 Tim. 4:3-4).

“And consider the patience of our Lord as salvation, as our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, also wrote to you, speaking of these things as he does in all his letters. In them, there are some things hard to understand that the ignorant and unstable distort to their own destruction, just as they do the other Scriptures” (2 Pet. 3:15-16).



## chapter six:

### *The Sixth Fatal Error*

#### **Sola-Scriptura Inevitably Leads to Christian Relativism and Individualism**

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**T**he most scandalous fruit of Luther's linear lie has been the ballooning of thousands upon thousands of different Protestant denominations, as the due result of private interpretations apart from the true teachings of the Magisterium. The reason why there are over three-thousand different Protestant denominations is because definitive and authoritative truths cannot be known through *sola-scriptura*.

The first fruit of *sola-scriptura* is not denominations or divisions but is Christian relativism. Because *sola-scriptura* empowers its adherents to discover the truth according to their light, the truth of sacred Scripture remains elusive to them and it proves to be the gateway to Christian secularism and the rejection of the authority of sacred Scripture altogether. This is not hyperbolic rhetoric; the proof is these statements are all around us. Over the past two centuries, we have witnessed the formerly proud Christian universities in the United States (e.g. Harvard and Princeton) fall into the rancorous cesspool of liberal relativism and secularism because they lack an authoritative and definitive source of truth. Today we are witnessing every Protestant denomination slip further and further in moral relativism. The modern Protestant church is no longer a counter-cultural agent for change. On the contrary, it is beginning to look very much like the world.

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***sola-scriptura* inevitable leads to  
christian relativism and individualism**

It is an odd thing indeed to suggest that a Christian can be guilty of being a relativist or an individualist, but such is the case in the Protestantism religion, which is the seed of the so-called 'age of enlightenment.

In Relativism, reason is unable to know objective moral truth. It is not in theory that the Protestant champions Christian Relativism because sacred Scripture clearly says that Christ is the Truth and the word of God is truth (Cf. Jn. 14:6, 17:17). Therefore, truth is knowable, definitive, and axiomatic. Rather, it is in their praxis of *sola-scriptura* that Protestants hold that the definitive truth of God is unknowable. For this reason, every Protestant denomination claims to teach the revealed truth, arrived at through *sola-scriptura*, which also happen to be in disagreement with the revealed truth that every other Protestant denomination teaches and also found through *sola-scriptura*.

Not only is truth relative between Protestant denominations, but even within the assembly of each denomination is definitive truth unknowable. For this reason, has the decision of many Protestant general assembly's vote to approve the ordaining of non-celibate homosexual clergy and homosexual marriages been rejected by some of their local member churches.

How is it that a majority at the general assembly of every member Presbyterian church can vote to approve homosexual clergy and marriage, but the local church can reject the vote unless the truth is relative? How could *sola-scriptura* lead these

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two related groups to two vastly different conclusions unless the truth is something relative?

Not only is truth relative between Protestant denominations and within each denomination, but it is even difficult to find a Protestant who believes everything that that their 'own' church teaches. In Individualism, the human person exists as an isolated individual who has himself as his own moral arbiter and who enters into a relationship with others only if he so chooses. *Sola-scriptura* inevitably leads to Individualism because through Scripture alone each Christian can arrive at his or her own interpretation of the truth, relative to themselves. *Sola-scriptura* does not require a prayerful community effort. Inasmuch as sacred Scripture tells us not to forsake the assembly (Cf. Heb. 10:25), Christian relativism allows each Protestant to define for themselves what the 'church/assembly' actually is. I cannot count how many Protestants I have met who believe that it is not necessary to attend Church.

The brand of Christian Relativism and Individualism that *sola-scriptura* created has empowered Christians in this day to say, 'This is what God has revealed to me through Scripture and I believe that it is true regardless if God has not revealed it to anyone else.' This attitude towards Divine Revelation undermines the work of the Holy Spirit, which was given to us so that we might be united in the Truth. Because they reject the authority of the Magisterium, the Protestant church has found itself to be in a very sad condition. It is barely conscious, brain-dead, and laying in a bed in an unhygienic hospice. If I were not a Catholic, I would recommend pulling the plug immediately!

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In this way, with many parts of the world beginning to resemble the last days that Paul wrote to Timothy about, we need to get our collective act together with a single and consistent teaching on Jesus, repentance, faith, and love, or else the entire world will become just as he described it.

It is the time to reject Christian relativism and secularism. We need one definitive and authoritative interpreter of sacred Scripture to lead us into these dark days ahead. It is time for all Christians to return home to their Holy Mother - the Catholic Church.

### **definitive and authoritative truth is not only knowable - it is obligatory**

I have found great comfort in the Catholic Church, because for the first time in my life truth was knowable, definitive, reliable, and, most importantly, obligatory. Indeed, I could abuse my God-given free will or not allow my God-given conscience to be properly formed and reject the Church's teachings on abortion by helping a woman procure one, but by doing so I would automatically excommunicate myself from the Catholic Church. Moreover, the deliberate and persistent rejection of what the Church teaches would disqualify me from being a Catholic.

It is very admirable for our Protestant brothers and sisters to search diligently for the truth, but to search for truth through Scripture alone is a contradiction in terms, being that sacred Scripture repeatedly points to sources other than itself as the source of truth. Using *sola-scriptura* as a source of truth is like trying to clean out the inside of your nose with a pitchfork. It is just the wrong tool to use for the task. We do

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not need to create a new thing to know the definitive and authoritative truth of sacred Scripture; we already have that in the Magisterium.

There is only one thing that all of sacred Scripture calls the Truth and that is Christ Jesus Himself, who said, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, then you will also know my Father” (Jn. 14:6-7). Moreover, there is only one thing that sacred Scripture calls the Pillar and Foundation of Truth, and that is the Apostolic Church; “But if I should be delayed, you should know how to behave in the household of God, which is the Church of the living God, the Pillar and Foundation of Truth” (1 Tim. 3:15). Furthermore, there is only one thing that sacred Scripture says will always guide us to all truth; “The Advocate, the Holy Spirit that the Father will send in my name - He will teach you everything and remind you of all that [I] told you” (Jn. 14:26).

It is from these three sources alone that the truth of sacred Scripture came forth and continues to be taught by the Catholic Church. For this reason, the Catholic Church has become counter-cultural and an obstacle for the wicked, but a beacon of light for the children of God.

### **conclusion**

We are all witnessing that the fruits of *sola-scriptura* in modern Protestant Christian Relativism and Individualism. The denigration into these errors was not immediate, but because they lacked a stable and consistent source of truth and authority, such as Catholics have in the Magisterium, it was

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inevitable that the Protestant church would confuse Divine truth with secular expediency.

Again, brothers and sisters, these times are too perilous for us to be peddling around a potpourri of shifting doctrine. It is time for all of those who are outside of the true Apostolic Church to come home and consolidate our spiritual gifts efforts so that we can build up one Body of Christ to repel the enemy.



## chapter seven:

### *The Seventh Fatal Error*

**The Summation of it all:**

**Sola-Scriptura Just Doesn't Work!**

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**H**eretofore, I have thus enumerated the seven Fatal Errors of Martin Luther's doctrine of *sola-scriptura*, and why according to the Latin medieval axiom 'Bonum ex intergra causa, malus ex quocumque defecto' they are defective and not worthy of anyone's assent. The summation of all the errors is wrapped up in these ten words: ***Sola-scriptura* Just Doesn't Work**. It was Dead on Arrival.

If you went to a car lot and there before you sat parked two automobiles for sale; both of them equally attractive, with the exact same features, and both selling for the exact same price, but one had an engine and tires and the other did not, which one would you purchase? The car that works or the one that does not? *Sola-scriptura* is the vehicle that does not have an engine or tires. Looks good, but it doesn't work. It is a non-starter. Dead On Arrival!

The question is, 'If our Lord prayed that we would be one, just as the Father and Son are one, so that we may be in them, and so that the world would know that the Father sent His Son, then how great are we sinning against God with all of these competing Christian faiths and doctrines?' No wonder why people think we Christians are hypocrites. We spit in the face of Jesus when we reject the Only Church that He started through His Apostles. We have scourged His one Body with thousands upon thousands of painful lashes to the flesh.

**THE SUMMATION OF IT ALL:  
SOLA-SCRIPTURA JUST DOESN'T WORK!**

**the summation of it all**

The difference between the Church that Christ Jesus built, in which He Himself is the cornerstone, and the church that Luther, Calvin, King Henry VIII, and other men have built is as clear as the Psalm: “Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build. Unless the Lord guards the city, in vain does the guard keep watch” (Ps. 127:1).

It was easy for Martin Luther and others to lie and say that the Church of the Apostles somehow lost the truth, but to say such was a contradiction. Truth is not a thing that can be lost. Truth is a person named Jesus Christ and His Apostolic Church is the Pillar and Foundation of Truth. Truth always and eternally perseveres in love. Truth is the first fruit of love and God is love; therefore God is truth. To say that the Church (the Pillar and Foundation of Truth), which Christ Jesus (the Truth) established through His Apostles, somehow lost that truth is to say that God no longer exists, and that just is not so!

I do understand, from personal experience, how hard it is to put pride aside and consider something to be true that you had heard for so long was a lie. Yet, notwithstanding the natural difficulties of being human, you must also recognize that you have a human responsibility to diligently search for the truth, and, once found, you have a greater responsibility to obey it. “Draw near to God and He will draw near to you” (Jas. 4:8).

Finally, if *sola-scriptura* were true then Scripture would have authorized Christians to practice their faith in separate and competing communities that teach different and

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competing doctrines, but it does not. It actually teaches the opposite (Cf. Jn. 17.21; Eph. 4:5-6)!

Therefore, it is time for us to shed the lies of the past that have caused so much harm to our unity and society. The time has come for all of us to be vulnerable, by humbly *Cooperating with God* and trusting in the teachings of the Apostles that are fully contained within the only truly Apostolic Church that He has protected and preserved for nearly two thousand years.

Essentially, you can be either a part of the problem or apart of the solution. It is your free choice to either *Cooperate with God* or to continue your protest against Him. Only one of these ways leads to virtue and holiness, while the other leads to frustration and condemnation. Choose this day whom you will serve, either the God of Truth and Unity or the Father of lies and division.



## **appendix a (what do i do now?):**

1. If you are a non-Catholic, you should approach the Church, begin instruction, become a Catholic, and practice the faith in all love and truth.
2. If you are a fallen-away Catholic, you should return to the faith, make a sincere confession, immediately abandon at least all your mortal sins, and resolve to learn the faith better and to practice it in truth and love till death.
3. If you are a tepid or lukewarm Catholic, you should start earnestly to read about the Faith, fall in love with it and begin to practice it with more faith and passion.
4. If you are a dedicated Catholic, you should pick up the pace of your spiritual life, read and pray more, and ask God to help you become a holy saint.

# **appendix b (dogmatic constitution on divine revelation):**

DOGOMATIC CONSTITUTION  
ON DIVINE REVELATION  
DEI VERBUM  
SOLEMNLY PROMULGATED  
BY HIS HOLINESS  
POPE PAUL VI  
ON NOVEMBER 18, 1965

## PREFACE

1. Hearing the word of God with reverence and proclaiming it with faith, the sacred synod takes its direction from these words of St. John: "We announce to you the eternal life which dwelt with the Father and was made visible to us. What we have seen and heard we announce to you, so that you may have fellowship with us and our common fellowship be with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:2-3). Therefore, following in the footsteps of the Council of Trent and of the First Vatican Council, this present council wishes to set forth authentic doctrine on divine revelation and how it is handed on, so that by hearing the message of salvation the whole world may believe, by believing it may hope, and by hoping it may love. (1)

## CHAPTER I REVELATION ITSELF

2. In His goodness and wisdom God chose to reveal Himself and to make known to us the hidden purpose of His will (see Eph. 1:9) by which through Christ, the Word made flesh, man might in the Holy Spirit have access to the Father and come to share in the divine nature (see Eph. 2:18; 2 Peter 1:4). Through this revelation, therefore, the invisible God (see Col. 1:15, 1 Tim. 1:17) out of the abundance of His love speaks to men as friends (see Ex. 33:11;

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John 15:14-15) and lives among them (see Bar. 3:38), so that He may invite and take them into fellowship with Himself. This plan of revelation is realized by deeds and words having in inner unity: the deeds wrought by God in the history of salvation manifest and confirm the teaching and realities signified by the words, while the words proclaim the deeds and clarify the mystery contained in them. By this revelation then, the deepest truth about God and the salvation of man shines out for our sake in Christ, who is both the mediator and the fullness of all revelation. (2)

3. God, who through the Word creates all things (see John 1:3) and keeps them in existence, gives men an enduring witness to Himself in created realities (see Rom. 1:19-20). Planning to make known the way of heavenly salvation, He went further and from the start manifested Himself to our first parents. Then after their fall His promise of redemption aroused in them the hope of being saved (see Gen. 3:15) and from that time on He ceaselessly kept the human race in His care, to give eternal life to those who perseveringly do good in search of salvation (see Rom. 2:6-7). Then, at the time He had appointed He called Abraham in order to make of him a great nation (see Gen. 12:2). Through the patriarchs, and after them through Moses and the prophets, He taught this people to acknowledge Himself the one living and true God, provident father and just judge, and to wait for the Savior promised by Him, and in this manner prepared the way for the Gospel down through the centuries.

4. Then, after speaking in many and varied ways through the prophets, "now at last in these days God has spoken to us in His Son" (Heb. 1:1-2). For He sent His Son, the eternal Word, who enlightens all men, so that He might dwell among men and tell them of the innermost being of God (see John 1:1-18). Jesus Christ, therefore, the Word made flesh, was sent as "a man to men." (3) He "speaks the words of God" (John 3:34), and completes the work of salvation which His Father gave Him to do (see John

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5:36; John 17:4). To see Jesus is to see His Father (John 14:9). For this reason Jesus perfected revelation by fulfilling it through his whole work of making Himself present and manifesting Himself: through His words and deeds, His signs and wonders, but especially through His death and glorious resurrection from the dead and final sending of the Spirit of truth. Moreover He confirmed with divine testimony what revelation proclaimed, that God is with us to free us from the darkness of sin and death, and to raise us up to life eternal.

The Christian dispensation, therefore, as the new and definitive covenant, will never pass away and we now await no further new public revelation before the glorious manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ (see 1 Tim. 6:14 and Tit. 2:13).

5. "The obedience of faith" (Rom. 13:26; see 1:5; 2 Cor 10:5-6) "is to be given to God who reveals, an obedience by which man commits his whole self freely to God, offering the full submission of intellect and will to God who reveals," (4) and freely assenting to the truth revealed by Him. To make this act of faith, the grace of God and the interior help of the Holy Spirit must precede and assist, moving the heart and turning it to God, opening the eyes of the mind and giving "joy and ease to everyone in assenting to the truth and believing it." (5) To bring about an ever deeper understanding of revelation the same Holy Spirit constantly brings faith to completion by His gifts.

6. Through divine revelation, God chose to show forth and communicate Himself and the eternal decisions of His will regarding the salvation of men. That is to say, He chose to share with them those divine treasures which totally transcend the understanding of the human mind. (6)

As a sacred synod has affirmed, God, the beginning and end of all things, can be known with certainty from created reality by the

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light of human reason (see Rom. 1:20); but teaches that it is through His revelation that those religious truths which are by their nature accessible to human reason can be known by all men with ease, with solid certitude and with no trace of error, even in this present state of the human race. (7)

### **CHAPTER II HANDING ON DIVINE REVELATION**

7. In His gracious goodness, God has seen to it that what He had revealed for the salvation of all nations would abide perpetually in its full integrity and be handed on to all generations. Therefore Christ the Lord in whom the full revelation of the supreme God is brought to completion (see Cor. 1:20; 3:13; 4:6), commissioned the Apostles to preach to all men that Gospel which is the source of all saving truth and moral teaching, (1) and to impart to them heavenly gifts. This Gospel had been promised in former times through the prophets, and Christ Himself had fulfilled it and promulgated it with His lips. This commission was faithfully fulfilled by the Apostles who, by their oral preaching, by example, and by observances handed on what they had received from the lips of Christ, from living with Him, and from what He did, or what they had learned through the prompting of the Holy Spirit. The commission was fulfilled, too, by those Apostles and apostolic men who under the inspiration of the same Holy Spirit committed the message of salvation to writing. (2)

But in order to keep the Gospel forever whole and alive within the Church, the Apostles left bishops as their successors, "handing over" to them "the authority to teach in their own place." (3) This sacred tradition, therefore, and Sacred Scripture of both the Old and New Testaments are like a mirror in which the pilgrim Church on earth looks at God, from whom she has received everything, until she is brought finally to see Him as He is, face to face (see 1 John 3:2).

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8. And so the apostolic preaching, which is expressed in a special way in the inspired books, was to be preserved by an unending succession of preachers until the end of time. Therefore the Apostles, handing on what they themselves had received, warn the faithful to hold fast to the traditions which they have learned either by word of mouth or by letter (see 2 Thess. 2:15), and to fight in defense of the faith handed on once and for all (see Jude 1:3) (4) Now what was handed on by the Apostles includes everything which contributes toward the holiness of life and increase in faith of the peoples of God; and so the Church, in her teaching, life and worship, perpetuates and hands on to all generations all that she herself is, all that she believes.

This tradition which comes from the Apostles develop in the Church with the help of the Holy Spirit. (5) For there is a growth in the understanding of the realities and the words which have been handed down. This happens through the contemplation and study made by believers, who treasure these things in their hearts (see Luke, 2:19, 51) through a penetrating understanding of the spiritual realities which they experience, and through the preaching of those who have received through Episcopal succession the sure gift of truth. For as the centuries succeed one another, the Church constantly moves forward toward the fullness of divine truth until the words of God reach their complete fulfillment in her.

The words of the holy fathers witness to the presence of this living tradition, whose wealth is poured into the practice and life of the believing and praying Church. Through the same tradition the Church's full canon of the sacred books is known, and the sacred writings themselves are more profoundly understood and unceasingly made active in her; and thus God, who spoke of old, uninterruptedly converses with the bride of His beloved Son; and the Holy Spirit, through whom the living voice of the Gospel resounds in the Church, and through her, in the world, leads unto

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all truth those who believe and makes the word of Christ dwell abundantly in them (see Col. 3:16).

9. Hence there exists a close connection and communication between sacred tradition and Sacred Scripture. For both of them, flowing from the same divine wellspring, in a certain way merge into a unity and tend toward the same end. For Sacred Scripture is the word of God inasmuch as it is consigned to writing under the inspiration of the divine Spirit, while sacred tradition takes the word of God entrusted by Christ the Lord and the Holy Spirit to the Apostles, and hands it on to their successors in its full purity, so that led by the light of the Spirit of truth, they may in proclaiming it preserve this word of God faithfully, explain it, and make it more widely known. Consequently it is not from Sacred Scripture alone that the Church draws her certainty about everything which has been revealed. Therefore both sacred tradition and Sacred Scripture are to be accepted and venerated with the same sense of loyalty and reverence.(6)

10. Sacred tradition and Sacred Scripture form one sacred deposit of the word of God, committed to the Church. Holding fast to this deposit the entire holy people united with their shepherds remain always steadfast in the teaching of the Apostles, in the common life, in the breaking of the bread and in prayers (see Acts 2, 42, Greek text), so that holding to, practicing and professing the heritage of the faith, it becomes on the part of the bishops and faithful a single common effort. (7)

But the task of authentically interpreting the word of God, whether written or handed on, (8) has been entrusted exclusively to the living teaching office of the Church, (9) whose authority is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ. This teaching office is not above the word of God, but serves it, teaching only what has been handed on, listening to it devoutly, guarding it scrupulously and explaining it faithfully in accord with a divine commission and

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with the help of the Holy Spirit, it draws from this one deposit of faith everything which it presents for belief as divinely revealed.

It is clear, therefore, that sacred tradition, Sacred Scripture and the teaching authority of the Church, in accord with God's most wise design, are so linked and joined together that one cannot stand without the others, and that all together and each in its own way under the action of the one Holy Spirit contribute effectively to the salvation of souls.

**CHAPTER III  
SACRED SCRIPTURE, ITS INSPIRATION AND DIVINE  
INTERPRETATION**

11. Those divinely revealed realities which are contained and presented in Sacred Scripture have been committed to writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. For holy mother Church, relying on the belief of the Apostles (see John 20:31; 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 1:19-20, 3:15-16), holds that the books of both the Old and New Testaments in their entirety, with all their parts, are sacred and canonical because written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, they have God as their author and have been handed on as such to the Church herself.(1) In composing the sacred books, God chose men and while employed by Him (2) they made use of their powers and abilities, so that with Him acting in them and through them, (3) they, as true authors, consigned to writing everything and only those things which He wanted. (4)

Therefore, since everything asserted by the inspired authors or sacred writers must be held to be asserted by the Holy Spirit, it follows that the books of Scripture must be acknowledged as teaching solidly, faithfully and without error that truth which God wanted put into sacred writings (5) for the sake of salvation. Therefore "all Scripture is divinely inspired and has its use for teaching the truth and refuting error, for reformation of manners and discipline in right living, so that the man who belongs to God

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may be efficient and equipped for good work of every kind" (2 Tim. 3:16-17, Greek text).

12. However, since God speaks in Sacred Scripture through men in human fashion, (6) the interpreter of Sacred Scripture, in order to see clearly what God wanted to communicate to us, should carefully investigate what meaning the sacred writers really intended, and what God wanted to manifest by means of their words.

To search out the intention of the sacred writers, attention should be given, among other things, to "literary forms." For truth is set forth and expressed differently in texts which are variously historical, prophetic, poetic, or of other forms of discourse. The interpreter must investigate what meaning the sacred writer intended to express and actually expressed in particular circumstances by using contemporary literary forms in accordance with the situation of his own time and culture. (7) For the correct understanding of what the sacred author wanted to assert, due attention must be paid to the customary and characteristic styles of feeling, speaking and narrating which prevailed at the time of the sacred writer, and to the patterns men normally employed at that period in their everyday dealings with one another. (8)

But, since Holy Scripture must be read and interpreted in the sacred spirit in which it was written, (9) no less serious attention must be given to the content and unity of the whole of Scripture if the meaning of the sacred texts is to be correctly worked out. The living tradition of the whole Church must be taken into account along with the harmony which exists between elements of the faith. It is the task of exegetes to work according to these rules toward a better understanding and explanation of the meaning of Sacred Scripture, so that through preparatory study the judgment of the Church may mature. For all of what has been said about the way of interpreting Scripture is subject finally to the judgment of the

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Church, which carries out the divine commission and ministry of guarding and interpreting the word of God. (10)

13. In Sacred Scripture, therefore, while the truth and holiness of God always remains intact, the marvelous "condescension" of eternal wisdom is clearly shown, "that we may learn the gentle kindness of God, which words cannot express, and how far He has gone in adapting His language with thoughtful concern for our weak human nature." (11) For the words of God, expressed in human language, have been made like human discourse, just as the word of the eternal Father, when He took to Himself the flesh of human weakness, was in every way made like men.

**CHAPTER IV  
THE OLD TESTAMENT**

14. In carefully planning and preparing the salvation of the whole human race the God of infinite love, by a special dispensation, chose for Himself a people to whom He would entrust His promises. First He entered into a covenant with Abraham (see Gen. 15:18) and, through Moses, with the people of Israel (see Ex. 24:8). To this people which He had acquired for Himself, He so manifested Himself through words and deeds as the one true and living God that Israel came to know by experience the ways of God with men. Then too, when God Himself spoke to them through the mouth of the prophets, Israel daily gained a deeper and clearer understanding of His ways and made them more widely known among the nations (see Ps. 21:29; 95:1-3; Is. 2:1-5; Jer. 3:17). The plan of salvation foretold by the sacred authors, recounted and explained by them, is found as the true word of God in the books of the Old Testament: these books, therefore, written under divine inspiration, remain permanently valuable. "For all that was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope" (Rom. 15:4).

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15. The principal purpose to which the plan of the old covenant was directed was to prepare for the coming of Christ, the redeemer of all and of the messianic kingdom, to announce this coming by prophecy (see Luke 24:44; John 5:39; 1 Peter 1:10), and to indicate its meaning through various types (see 1 Cor. 10:12). Now the books of the Old Testament, in accordance with the state of mankind before the time of salvation established by Christ, reveal to all men the knowledge of God and of man and the ways in which God, just and merciful, deals with men. These books, though they also contain some things which are incomplete and temporary, nevertheless show us true divine pedagogy. (1) These same books, then, give expression to a lively sense of God, contain a store of sublime teachings about God, sound wisdom about human life, and a wonderful treasury of prayers, and in them the mystery of our salvation is present in a hidden way. Christians should receive them with reverence.

16. God, the inspirer and author of both Testaments, wisely arranged that the New Testament be hidden in the Old and the Old be made manifest in the New. (2) For, though Christ established the new covenant in His blood (see Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25), still the books of the Old Testament with all their parts, caught up into the proclamation of the Gospel, (3) acquire and show forth their full meaning in the New Testament (see Matt. 5:17; Luke 24:27; Rom. 16:25-26; 2 Cor. 14:16) and in turn shed light on it and explain it.

### **CHAPTER V THE NEW TESTAMENT**

17. The word God, which is the power of God for the salvation of all who believe (see Rom. 1:16), is set forth and shows its power in a most excellent way in the writings of the New Testament. For when the fullness of time arrived (see Gal. 4:4), the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us in His fullness of graces and truth (see John 1:14). Christ established the kingdom of God on earth,

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manifested His Father and Himself by deeds and words, and completed His work by His death, resurrection and glorious Ascension and by the sending of the Holy Spirit. Having been lifted up from the earth, He draws all men to Himself (see John 12:32, Greek text), He who alone has the words of eternal life (see John 6:68). This mystery had not been manifested to other generations as it was now revealed to His holy Apostles and prophets in the Holy Spirit (see Eph. 3:4-6, Greek text), so that they might preach the Gospel, stir up faith in Jesus, Christ and Lord, and gather together the Church. Now the writings of the New Testament stand as a perpetual and divine witness to these realities.

18. It is common knowledge that among all the Scriptures, even those of the New Testament, the Gospels have a special preeminence, and rightly so, for they are the principal witness for the life and teaching of the incarnate Word, our savior.

The Church has always and everywhere held and continues to hold that the four Gospels are of apostolic origin. For what the Apostles preached in fulfillment of the commission of Christ, afterwards they themselves and apostolic men, under the inspiration of the divine Spirit, handed on to us in writing: the foundation of faith, namely, the fourfold Gospel, according to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.(1)

19. Holy Mother Church has firmly and with absolute constancy held, and continues to hold, that the four Gospels just named, whose historical character the Church unhesitatingly asserts, faithfully hand on what Jesus Christ, while living among men, really did and taught for their eternal salvation until the day He was taken up into heaven (see Acts 1:1). Indeed, after the Ascension of the Lord the Apostles handed on to their hearers what He had said and done. This they did with that clearer understanding which they enjoyed (3) after they had been

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instructed by the glorious events of Christ's life and taught by the light of the Spirit of truth. (2) The sacred authors wrote the four Gospels, selecting some things from the many which had been handed on by word of mouth or in writing, reducing some of them to a synthesis, explaining some things in view of the situation of their churches and preserving the form of proclamation but always in such fashion that they told us the honest truth about Jesus.(4) For their intention in writing was that either from their own memory and recollections, or from the witness of those who "themselves from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word" we might know "the truth" concerning those matters about which we have been instructed (see Luke 1:2-4).

20. Besides the four Gospels, the canon of the New Testament also contains the epistles of St. Paul and other apostolic writings, composed under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, by which, according to the wise plan of God, those matters which concern Christ the Lord are confirmed, His true teaching is more and more fully stated, the saving power of the divine work of Christ is preached, the story is told of the beginnings of the Church and its marvelous growth, and its glorious fulfillment is foretold.

For the Lord Jesus was with His apostles as He had promised (see Matt. 28:20) and sent them the advocate Spirit who would lead them into the fullness of truth (see John 16:13).

### **CHAPTER VI**

#### **SACRED SCRIPTURE IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH**

21. The Church has always venerated the divine Scriptures just as she venerates the body of the Lord, since, especially in the sacred liturgy, she unceasingly receives and offers to the faithful the bread of life from the table both of God's word and of Christ's body. She has always maintained them, and continues to do so, together with sacred tradition, as the supreme rule of faith, since, as inspired by God and committed once and for all to writing, they impart the

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word of God Himself without change, and make the voice of the Holy Spirit resound in the words of the prophets and Apostles. Therefore, like the Christian religion itself, all the preaching of the Church must be nourished and regulated by Sacred Scripture. For in the sacred books, the Father who is in heaven meets His children with great love and speaks with them; and the force and power in the word of God is so great that it stands as the support and energy of the Church, the strength of faith for her sons, the food of the soul, the pure and everlasting source of spiritual life. Consequently these words are perfectly applicable to Sacred Scripture: "For the word of God is living and active" (Heb. 4:12) and "it has power to build you up and give you your heritage among all those who are sanctified" (Acts 20:32; see 1 Thess. 2:13).

22. Easy access to Sacred Scripture should be provided for all the Christian faithful. That is why the Church from the very beginning accepted as her own that very ancient Greek translation; of the Old Testament which is called the septuagint; and she has always given a place of honor to other Eastern translations and Latin ones especially the Latin translation known as the vulgate. But since the word of God should be accessible at all times, the Church by her authority and with maternal concern sees to it that suitable and correct translations are made into different languages, especially from the original texts of the sacred books. And should the opportunity arise and the Church authorities approve, if these translations are produced in cooperation with the separated brethren as well, all Christians will be able to use them.

23. The bride of the incarnate Word, the Church taught by the Holy Spirit, is concerned to move ahead toward a deeper understanding of the Sacred Scriptures so that she may increasingly feed her sons with the divine words. Therefore, she also encourages the study of the holy Fathers of both East and West and of sacred liturgies. Catholic exegetes then and other students of sacred theology, working diligently together and using appropriate means,

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should devote their energies, under the watchful care of the sacred teaching office of the Church, to an exploration and exposition of the divine writings. This should be so done that as many ministers of the divine word as possible will be able effectively to provide the nourishment of the Scriptures for the people of God, to enlighten their minds, strengthen their wills, and set men's hearts on fire with the love of God. (1) The sacred synod encourages the sons of the Church and Biblical scholars to continue energetically, following the mind of the Church, with the work they have so well begun, with a constant renewal of vigor. (2)

24. Sacred theology rests on the written word of God, together with sacred tradition, as its primary and perpetual foundation. By scrutinizing in the light of faith all truth stored up in the mystery of Christ, theology is most powerfully strengthened and constantly rejuvenated by that word. For the Sacred Scriptures contain the word of God and since they are inspired really are the word of God; and so the study of the sacred page is, as it were, the soul of sacred theology. (3) By the same word of Scripture the ministry of the word also, that is, pastoral preaching, catechetics and all Christian instruction, in which the liturgical homily must hold the foremost place, is nourished in a healthy way and flourishes in a holy way.

25. Therefore, all the clergy must hold fast to the Sacred Scriptures through diligent sacred reading and careful study, especially the priests of Christ and others, such as deacons and catechists who are legitimately active in the ministry of the word. This is to be done so that none of them will become "an empty preacher of the word of God outwardly, who is not a listener to it inwardly" (4) since they must share the abundant wealth of the divine word with the faithful committed to them, especially in the sacred liturgy. The sacred synod also earnestly and especially urges all the Christian faithful, especially Religious, to learn by frequent reading of the divine Scriptures the "excellent knowledge of Jesus Christ" (Phil.

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3:8). "For ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ."(5) Therefore, they should gladly put themselves in touch with the sacred text itself, whether it be through the liturgy, rich in the divine word, or through devotional reading, or through instructions suitable for the purpose and other aids which, in our time, with approval and active support of the shepherds of the Church, are commendably spread everywhere. And let them remember that prayer should accompany the reading of Sacred Scripture, so that God and man may talk together; for "we speak to Him when we pray; we hear Him when we read the divine saying."  
(6)

It devolves on sacred bishops "who have the apostolic teaching"(7) to give the faithful entrusted to them suitable instruction in the right use of the divine books, especially the New Testament and above all the Gospels. This can be done through translations of the sacred texts, which are to be provided with the necessary and really adequate explanations so that the children of the Church may safely and profitably become conversant with the Sacred Scriptures and be penetrated with their spirit.

Furthermore, editions of the Sacred Scriptures, provided with suitable footnotes, should be prepared also for the use of non-Christians and adapted to their situation. Both pastors of souls and Christians generally should see to the wise distribution of these in one way or another.

26. In this way, therefore, through the reading and study of the sacred books "the word of God may spread rapidly and be glorified" (2 Thess. 3:1) and the treasure of revelation, entrusted to the Church, may more and more fill the hearts of men. Just as the life of the Church is strengthened through more frequent celebration of the Eucharistic mystery, similar we may hope for a new stimulus for the life of the Spirit from a growing reverence for the word of God, which "lasts forever" (Is. 40:8; see 1 Peter 1:23-25).

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### NOTES

#### **Preface**

##### Article 1:

1. cf. St. Augustine, "De Catechizandis Rudibus," C.IV 8: PL. 40, 316.

#### **Chapter I**

##### Article 2:

2. cf. Matt. 11:27; John 1:14 and 17; 14:6; 17:1-3; 2 Cor 3:16 and 4, 6; Eph. 1, 3-14.

##### Article 4:

3. Epistle to Diognetus, c. VII, 4: Funk, Apostolic Fathers, I, p. 403.

##### Article 5:

4. First Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith, Chap. 3, "On Faith:" Denzinger 1789 (3008).

5. Second Council of Orange, Canon 7: Denzinger 180 (377); First Vatican Council, loc. cit.: Denzinger 1791 (3010).

##### Article 6:

6. First Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith, Chap. 2, "On Revelation:" Denzinger 1786 (3005).

7. Ibid: Denzinger 1785 and 1786 (3004 and 3005).

#### **Chapter II**

##### Article 7:

1. cf. Matt. 28:19-20, and Mark 16:15; Council of Trent, session IV, Decree on Scriptural Canons: Denzinger 783 (1501).

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2. cf. Council of Trent, loc. cit.; First Vatican Council, session III, Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith, Chap. 2, "On revelation:" Denzinger 1787 (3005).

3. St. Irenaeus, "Against Heretics" III, 3, 1: PG 7, 848; Harvey, 2, p. 9.

Article 8:

4. cf. Second Council of Nicea: Denzinger 303 (602); Fourth Council of Constance, session X, Canon 1: Denzinger 336 (650-652).

5. cf. First Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith, Chap. 4, "On Faith and Reason:" Denzinger 1800 (3020).

Article 9:

6. cf. Council of Trent, session IV, loc. cit.: Denzinger 783 (1501).

Article 10:

7. cf. Pius XII, apostolic constitution, "Munificentissimus Deus," Nov. 1, 1950: A.A.S. 42 (1950) p. 756; Collected Writings of St. Cyprian, Letter 66, 8: Hartel, III, B, p. 733: "The Church [is] people united with the priest and the pastor together with his flock."

8. cf. First Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith, Chap. 3 "On Faith:" Denzinger 1792 (3011).

9. cf. Pius XII, encyclical "Humani Generis," Aug. 12, 1950: A.A.S. 42 (1950) pp. 568-69: Denzinger 2314 (3886).

### **Chapter III**

Article 11:

1. cf. First Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith, Chap. 2 "On Revelation:" Denzinger 1787 (3006); Biblical Commission, Decree of June 18, 1915: Denzinger 2180 (3629): EB 420; Holy Office, Epistle of Dec. 22, 1923: EB 499.

## **APPENDIX B (DOGMATIC CONSTITUTION ON DIVINE REVELATION):**

2. cf. Pius XII, encyclical "Divino Afflante Spiritu," Sept. 30, 1943: A.A.S. 35 (1943) p. 314; Enchiridion Bible. (EB) 556.
3. "In" and "for" man: cf. Heb. 1, and 4, 7; ("in"): 2 Sm. 23,2; Matt.1:22 and various places; ("for"): First Vatican Council, Schema on Catholic Doctrine, note 9: Coll. Lac. VII, 522.
4. Leo XIII, encyclical "Providentissimus Deus," Nov. 18, 1893: Denzinger 1952 (3293); EB 125.
5. cf. St. Augustine, "Gen. ad Litt." 2, 9, 20:PL 34, 270-271; Epistle 82, 3: PL 33, 277: CSEL 34, 2, p. 354. St. Thomas, "On Truth," Q. 12, A. 2, C.Council of Trent, session IV, Scriptural Canons: Denzinger 783 (1501). Leo XIII, encyclical "Providentissimus Deus:" EB 121, 124, 126-127. Pius XII, encyclical "Divino Afflante Spiritu:" EB 539.

### Article 12:

6. St. Augustine, "City of God," XVII, 6, 2: PL 41, 537: CSEL. XL, 2, 228.
7. St. Augustine, "On Christian Doctrine" III, 18, 26; PL 34, 75-76.
8. Pius XII, loc. cit. Denzinger 2294 (3829-3830); EB 557-562.
9. cf. Benedict XV, encyclical "Spiritus Paraclitus" Sept. 15, 1920:EB 469. St. Jerome, "In Galatians' 5, 19-20: PL 26, 417 A.
10. cf. First Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith, Chapter 2, "On Revelation:" Denzinger 1788 (3007).

### Article 13:

11. St. John Chrysostom "In Genesis" 3, 8 (Homily 17, 1): PG 53, 134; "Attemperatio" [in English "Suitable adjustment"] in Greek "synkatabasis."

## **Chapter IV**

### Article 15:

1. Pius XI, encyclical "Mit Brennender Sorge," March 14, 1937: A.A.S. 29 (1937) p. 51.

**DEAD ON ARRIVAL:  
THE SEVEN FATAL ERRORS OF SOLA-SCRIPTURA**

Article 16:

2. St. Augustine, "Quest. in Hept." 2,73: PL 34,623.

3. St. Irenaeus, "Against Heretics" III, 21,3: PG 7,950; (Same as 25,1: Harvey 2, p. 115). St. Cyril of Jerusalem, "Catech." 4,35; PG 33,497. Theodore of Mopsuestia, "In Soph." 1,4-6: PG 66, 452D-453A.

**Chapter V**

Article 18:

1. cf. St. Irenaeus, "Against Heretics" III, 11; 8: PG 7,885, Sagnard Edition, p. 194.

Article 19:

(Due to the necessities of translation, footnote 2 follows footnote 3 in text of Article 19.)

2. cf. John 14:26; 16:13.

3. John 2:22; 12:16; cf. 14:26; 16:12-13; 7:39.

4. cf. instruction "Holy Mother Church" edited by Pontifical Consilium for Promotion of Bible Studies; A.A.S. 56 (1964) p. 715.

**Chapter VI**

Article 23:

1. cf. Pius XII, encyclical "Divino Afflante Spiritu:" EB 551, 553, 567. Pontifical Biblical Commission, Instruction on Proper Teaching of Sacred Scripture in Seminaries and Religious Colleges, May 13, 1950: A.A.S. 42 (1950) pp. 495-505.

2. cf. Pius XII, *ibid*: EB 569.

Article 24:

3. cf. Leo XIII, encyclical "Providentissimus Deus:" EB 114; Benedict XV, encyclical "Spiritus Paraclitus:" EB 483.

**APPENDIX B (DOGMATIC CONSTITUTION  
ON DIVINE REVELATION):**

Article 25:

4. St. Augustine Sermons, 179,1: PL 38,966.

5. St. Jerome, Commentary on Isaiah, Prol.: PL 24,17. cf. Benedict XV, encyclical "Spiritus Paraclitus:" EB 475-480; Pius XII, encyclical "Divino Afflante Spiritu:" EB 544.

6. St. Ambrose, On the Duties of Ministers I, 20,88: PL 16,50.

7. St. Irenaeus, "Against Heretics" IV, 32,1: PG 7, 1071; (Same as 49,2) Harvey, 2, p. 255

## **appendix c (the three great creeds):**

### **The Apostle's Creed (2<sup>nd</sup> Century):**

I believe in God the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended to the dead.

On the third day, he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting. Amen.

### **Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed (4<sup>th</sup> Century):**

We believe in on God, the Father, the  
Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all  
that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only  
son of God, eternally begotten of the  
Father, God from God, Light from Light,  
true Good from true God, begotten, not  
made, one in Being with the Father.

Through Him all things were made. For us  
men and for our salvation. He came down

## **APPENDIX B (DOGMATIC CONSTITUTION ON DIVINE REVELATION):**

from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit He was born of the Virgin Mary, and became Man.

For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate; He suffered, died, and was buried.

On the third day He rose again in fulfillment of the Scriptures;

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and His kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son He is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. I believe in One, Holy Catholic, and Apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen

### **The Athanasian Creed (5<sup>th</sup> Century):**

I, N., enlightened by divine grace, profess the Christian faith as it is taught and practiced in the Catholic Church.

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth;

and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

**DEAD ON ARRIVAL:  
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He descended into hell;  
the third day He rose again from the dead;  
He ascended into heaven,  
sits at the right hand of God, the Father almighty;  
from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting.

I believe that this Church  
is the Church in which the fullness of God's revelation  
through His Son, Jesus Christ, abides.

I believe that her college of bishops, with the pope, the bishop  
of Rome, presiding at its center, continues to exercise in the  
world the authority for teaching and moral guidance given  
by Jesus Christ to his apostles for the salvation of all.

I further believe in seven sacraments, signs of worship through  
which the grace of the death, resurrection, and ascension of  
Jesus Christ is communicated.

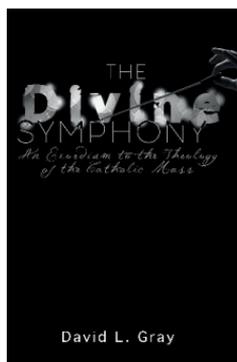
They are: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance,  
Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders, and Matrimony.

I promise, through prayer,  
participation in Church life and worship, and continued  
efforts to understanding the tenets of my faith, to form my  
conscience in such a way as to live according to the  
doctrines and practices which the Catholic Church  
prescribes for the individual and common good of her  
faithful.

## **NOTES**

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This book consists of four very accessible and easy to read movements that narrate, explore, and explains the meaning, mystery, theology, history, symbolism, and continuity of the Catholic Mass.

*The Political Works of Remigius Dei Girolami*, by Dr. Nichols Newman, offers a new translation of several of Remigius dei Girolami's political works, the *De Bono Communi*, *De Bono Pacis*, *Sermones de Pace* and the *De Iustitia* is offered.



Remigius dei Girolami, a Dominican friar and lector in the Santa Maria Novella church in Florence as well as a political philosopher and theologian, wrote in the context of the Guelf – Ghibbeline conflict in Florence in the early fourteenth century. Unfortunately, Remigius dei Girolami is rather poorly known, as he is eclipsed by his more famous teacher, Thomas Aquinas, and his Florentine contemporary, Dante Alighieri. Nevertheless, Remigius dei