Sola Scriptura

THE GOSPEL REVEALED · PART 9

Galatians 1:11-16a | Arvin Assembly of God | Pastor Brian Overturf | October 25, 2026

MY NOTES

INTRODUCTION

For three sermons we've been sitting on one phrase in verse 14… the phrase that ruled Paul's life before Christ.

Galatians 1:14
[14] And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

WHERE WE'VE BEEN

The traditions of my fathers…

- The Pharisees added to the Word. The Sadducees took from it.
- We looked in the mirror at our own traditions.
- We put Catholic tradition on the scale.
- We let the Bible answer the four best arguments against the Bible alone.

The battle today is sufficiency. Is the Bible enough? I don't want to be a prisoner of my culture… my traditions… or even my feelings. I want to be a prisoner of the Word.

Back to our roots. We just celebrated one hundred years of Arvin Assembly of God. So this morning we preach our doctrine… the way Paul told Timothy to.

1 Timothy 4:13
[13] Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

1 Timothy 4:16
[16] Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

Our fathers handed us something. In 1916, two years after our Fellowship was born and ten years before this church opened its doors, they wrote down sixteen Fundamental Truths. Before salvation, before the baptism in the Holy Spirit, before divine healing, before the second coming… they wrote down what we believe about the Bible.

Here's our first Fundamental Truth.

"The Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, are verbally inspired of God and are the revelation of God to man, the infallible, authoritative rule of faith and conduct." (1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:15–17; 2 Pet. 1:21)

Assemblies of God, Statement of Fundamental Truths, #1

EVERY WORD WAS CHOSEN ON PURPOSE

If this first truth falls… every other doctrine has nothing to stand on.

- **Both the Old and New Testaments…** the whole Bible, Genesis to Revelation.
- **Verbally inspired of God…** not just the ideas, the words.
- **The revelation of God to man…** not man reaching up, God reaching down.
- **The infallible, authoritative rule of faith and conduct…** what we believe and how we live.

A battle cry. Our fathers didn't invent this. They stood in a long line of believers who had to fight for the Bible. Our own Systematic Theology remembers the cry that came out of the Reformation.

> *"Consequently, the rallying cry of the Protestant Reformers was Sola Scriptura ('Scripture alone')! The Bible given by God speaks with God's authority directly to the individual."*
>
> **Stanley M. Horton, ed., Systematic Theology**

WHAT SCRIPTURE ALONE DOES NOT MEAN

Not "solo Scriptura"… just me, my Bible, and nobody else.

- We use the helps… commentaries, scholars, resources, even the church fathers. We thank God for them.
- We just don't put them on the same level as the Bible.
- Every one of them gets measured by the Word… including this pulpit.

Geisler and MacKenzie put it this way.

> *"Protestants who believe in sola Scriptura accept tradition; they simply do not believe it is infallible."*
>
> **Norman L. Geisler and Ralph E. MacKenzie, Roman Catholics and Evangelicals**

William Menzies, one of our own Assemblies of God scholars, opens his chapter on this truth with a question people still ask.

> *"How can I know which is the true religion? is an important question frequently asked. It is deserving of an answer, since one's eternal welfare is at stake. The real issue is the matter of authority."*
>
> **William W. Menzies, Bible Doctrines: A Pentecostal Perspective**

Who gets the last word? That's the issue in Galatians 1. Paul's conduct was ruled by Judaism. His zeal was ruled by the traditions of his fathers. He was sincere, disciplined, the best student in the best school… and he was wrong. Then God spoke, and something else took the last word.

Galatians 1:11-16a

[11] But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. [12] For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ. [13] For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it. [14] And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. [15] But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, [16] to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles,

Why does the Bible get the last word?

Our church didn't just write a sentence and leave it there. Right beside the first Fundamental Truth they put three Scriptures: 1 Thessalonians 2:13, 2 Timothy 3:15-17, and 2 Peter 1:21. Each one answers our question.

1. Because It Was Received (The revelation of God to man.)

One of Paul's earliest letters, to a young church he had to leave in a hurry. He thanks God without ceasing for one thing… how they received the Word.

1 Thessalonians 2:13
[13] For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, <u>you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God</u>, which also effectively works in you who believe.

Heard from men… received from God. Paul, Silas and Timothy did the talking. But the Thessalonians received it as God speaking.

That's exactly what Paul is fighting for in Galatians.

Galatians 1:11-12
[11] But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is <u>not according to man</u>. [12] For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, <u>but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ</u>.

Revelation. God pulls back the curtain. We didn't figure God out… God made Himself known, in the 66 books we call the Bible. If the Bible is the word of men, it's one more opinion on the table and you get a vote. If it's the revelation of the God who made heaven and earth, there's no vote.

We serve a God who speaks. Look at how Hebrews opens.

Hebrews 1:1-2
[1] God, who at various times and in various ways <u>spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets</u>, [2] <u>has in these last days spoken to us by His Son</u>, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;

God also speaks to everybody in a general way, through creation.

Romans 1:20
[20] For since the creation of the world <u>His invisible attributes are clearly seen</u>, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,

TWO KINDS OF REVELATION

- **Creation** tells you there's a God… that He's powerful and eternal.
- But creation can't tell you His name, that you're a sinner, or that He sent His Son to die for you.
- **The Bible** tells you God is good… and how He saved you.

It goes to work in you. Go back to the last phrase of 1 Thessalonians 2:13… the word of God "effectively works in you who believe." The word of men can inform you. Only the Word of God can transform you. Our Systematic Theology says it like this.

"As a person reads the Bible, the Bible in turn reads the person."
Stanley M. Horton, ed., Systematic Theology

And the proof is right here in Galatians.

Galatians 1:23
[23] But they were hearing only, "He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy."

HOW ARE YOU RECEIVING THE WORD?
It doesn't just change what you know. It changes who you are.

- When it corrects you… do you argue with it, or bend the knee?
- When it says something your family never taught you… which one gets the last word?
- When it goes to work on the inside… are you letting it?

Not as the word of men… but as it is in truth, the word of God.

2. Because It Was Breathed (Verbally inspired of God.)

But men held the pen… Moses, Paul, Peter. So how does a book written by men become the Word of God, word for word? Paul is in prison, writing his last letter, and he reminds Timothy where his faith came from.

2 Timothy 3:15
[15] and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

It points to Christ. Timothy's mother and grandmother taught him the Old Testament before he could read. The Old Testament wasn't a different religion. From Genesis on, it pointed to Christ… and salvation is through faith in Jesus alone.

2 Timothy 3:16
[16] All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

God-breathed. In the original language "inspiration" is one word: breathed out of the mouth of God. Hold on to that picture of breath.

Psalm 33:6
[6] By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.

The same breath that made the heavens breathed out the Scriptures.

Verbally means the words. Not just the ideas. Not just the big themes. The words. Menzies says it plain.

"If the words were not inspired, then people would be free to change them to fit their own ideas. Therefore, inspiration of the words was necessary to protect the truth."
William W. Menzies, Bible Doctrines: A Pentecostal Perspective

Jesus cared about the words too. Listen to Him in the Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 5:18
[18] For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.

ONE JOT. ONE TITTLE.

- **The jot** is the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet.
- **The tittle** is a tiny stroke of the pen that tells one letter from another.
- If God cares about every word, we should too. That's why we go verse by verse, word by word.

Paul builds a whole argument on one word… singular or plural.

Galatians 3:16
[16] Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ.

Not robots. You can hear Paul in Paul and Peter in Peter. Fifteen hundred years, forty authors… kings and fishermen, a doctor and a tax collector, shepherds and priests. One unified story, because there's one Author. God prepared every writer before he picked up a pen.

Galatians 1:15
[15] But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace,

Infallible. If God breathed it, it can't be wrong… because God can't be wrong. Menzies explains.

"The divine source and authority of the Scripture assure us that the Bible is also infallible, that is, incapable of error and therefore not capable of misleading, deceiving, or disappointing us."
William W. Menzies, Bible Doctrines: A Pentecostal Perspective

GOD'S WORD IS…

- Not capable of error.
- Not capable of misleading you.
- Not capable of deceiving you.
- Not capable of disappointing you.

Why? Because of who breathed it. Men make mistakes, forget and change their minds. God doesn't.

Numbers 23:19
[19] God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?

WHAT THE BREATHED WORD IS FOR

- **Profitable for doctrine…** what you believe.
- **For reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness…** how you live.

Enough. God didn't just change what Paul believed. He changed how Paul lived. And the breathed Word makes you complete.

2 Timothy 3:17
[17] that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

If God's Word makes you complete… what's missing? Nothing. It's enough to make you wise for salvation and enough to grow you. The psalmist said it three thousand years ago.

Psalm 19:7
[7] The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple;

Breathed. Every word. Without error. And enough.

3. Because Men Were Moved (By the Holy Spirit.)

If God breathed it… how did it get from God to these men? Peter, at the end of his life, tells the church what to hold on to. He starts with what he saw.

2 Peter 1:16
[16] For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty.

The mountain. On the Mount of Transfiguration, Jesus' face shined like the sun and Moses and Elijah appeared. Then Peter heard the audible voice of God the Father.

2 Peter 1:18
[18] And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.

If anybody had an experience to build his faith on, it was Peter. But watch what he says next.

2 Peter 1:19 (KJV)
[19] We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

More sure. Peter heard God's voice on the mountain… and he says God's written Word is even more sure. He doesn't point you to his experience. He points you back to the Word. We believe in experiences with God, and we believe God still speaks. But our Systematic Theology gives us a warning.

> *"No authoritative encounter with God supersedes the authority of His written Word. … All personal experiences must be checked and judged by Scripture."*
>
> **Stanley M. Horton, ed., Systematic Theology**

Every experience gets checked by the Word. Even Peter's. Even mine. Even yours.

Why is the written Word more sure? Peter tells you where it came from.

2 Peter 1:20
[20] knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation,

2 Peter 1:21
[21] for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

Carried along. Not one prophet woke up and decided to write some Scripture. The idea is a ship driven along by the wind… by the breath of God. The men spoke. The Holy Spirit carried them. The Old Testament writers told you over and over where their words came from.

"No wonder statements such as 'this is what the Lord says' occur 3,808 times in the Old Testament alone."

William W. Menzies, Bible Doctrines: A Pentecostal Perspective

Jesus promised the apostles the same Holy Spirit would carry them.

John 16:13
[13] However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

And that brings us right back to Paul.

Galatians 1:15-16a
[15] But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, [16] to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles,

God had to reveal it. The traditions of his fathers couldn't do that. His zeal and his education couldn't do that. The Spirit revealed Christ to Paul, sent him to preach Christ, and moved him to write. That's why we hold Galatians in our hands this morning.

THE SPIRIT NEVER CONTRADICTS THE WORD

The Spirit who moved them to write it will never move you to contradict it.

- If you feel led to something this Bible forbids… that isn't the Holy Spirit.
- If a prophecy says something this Bible doesn't… we test it by the Bible.
- If a feeling, a dream, or a word over your life pulls you from what is written… the Word wins.
- Not because we don't believe in the Spirit. Because we do.

The Fire Bible, a study Bible written for Pentecostal believers, warns us what happens when people let go of the Bible's authority.

"Without this view of Scripture, their faith will be weak and the Bible will be replaced by subjective religious experience (i.e., always changing, based on the person or situation) or by independent, critical and faulty human reasoning"

J. Wesley Adams and Donald C. Stamps, Fire Bible

WHY DOES THE BIBLE GET THE LAST WORD?

- **Received…** not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God.
- **Breathed…** all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. Every word. Without error. And enough.
- **Moved…** holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. More sure than any experience.

4. So We Walk by This Rule (The authoritative rule of faith and conduct.)

That leaves one phrase in our first Fundamental Truth… the authoritative rule of faith and conduct. Menzies explains where we get the word rule.

"The word 'canon' means 'a rule, a standard, a measuring rod.'"
William W. Menzies, Bible Doctrines: A Pentecostal Perspective

A measuring rod. The Bible isn't one voice among many. It's the rule every other voice gets measured by… the scale everything is weighed against. And Paul ends Galatians with that very word.

Galatians 6:16
[16] And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

A different rule. Paul started this letter as a man ruled by the traditions of his fathers. He ends it with a people who walk by a different rule. For one hundred years, this church has stood on this rule. If Jesus doesn't come back, may the next hundred years stand on it too.

Our Systematic Theology says it this way.

"The authority of the written Word is the authority of God himself. The Bible is not merely a record of God's authority in the past, but is God's authority today. Through the written Word the Holy Spirit continues to confront men and women with the claims of God. It is still 'Thus says the Lord!'"
Stanley M. Horton, ed., Systematic Theology

It is still… "Thus says the Lord!"

CONCLUSION

SO WHAT DO YOU DO WITH THIS?

- **Let it rule your faith…** what you believe about God, sin and eternity. Let the Bible have the last word.
- **Let it rule your conduct…** how you talk and how you work. Let the Bible have the last word.
- **Let it rule your experiences…** every feeling, every dream, every word, measured by what is written.

The same God who took Saul of Tarsus, a man ruled by the traditions of his fathers, and revealed His Son in him… is still speaking through His Word this morning. Maybe this morning is that morning for you.