

“Sufficiency, Illumination and Extra-Biblical Matters”
(WCF 1:6)

1. Review: what are some of the ways that the Bible reveals itself to be the Word of God? Received by the church, unity, miracles, fulfilled prophecy, accuracy, efficacy, sublimity and preservation. A left over point from last week is the fact that the Bible is shown to be the Word of God because it reveals the same God which is revealed in nature.
2. Are the Scripture sufficient? Are they enough? Yes. For what? Do they tell us how to do biology, mathematics, physics, auto mechanics? No. But they do tell us everything we know to do all these things to the glory of God. What else do they tell us?
 - a. Do they tell us everything we need to know about how to be saved (faith)? Yes.
 - b. Do they tell us everything we need to know to glorify God (life)? Yes.
 - c. Now are these things we need to know always plain in the Scripture? No. But the things we need to know regarding our salvation are clear enough.
 - d. Sometimes we need to use deduction. Sometimes these truths are clear, other times they are inferred by what is said.
 - (i) For instance: Am I born condemned? The Bible doesn't specifically use my name, but I can deduce that I am. Adam's sin was imputed to all mankind, descending from him by ordinary generation. I am a part of mankind, by ordinary generation. Therefore Adam's sin was imputed to me. Everyone who is guilty of sin will be condemned. I am guilty of Adam's sin. Therefore, I will be condemned.
 - (ii) Will I be saved? Jesus died to save all who believe in Him. I believe in Him. Therefore, I will be saved.
 - e. If the Scriptures contain all we need for faith and life, then do we really need any further revelation? No. What about tradition, as the Roman and Greek Church tells us? They are not necessary either.
 - (i) 2 Timothy 3:14-17 “You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*; and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”
 - (ii) Galatians 1:8 “But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed. 9 As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed.”
3. Now there is one other area. What about matters that aren't addressed specifically in the Bible?
 - a. How do we know when to start the service? When to end it? How long should it be? In this last example, it should be at least long enough to do what we have gathered to do well. But God's Word is not specific.
 - b. What kind of building should we meet in? What kind of chairs should we use? What should the temperature of the building be? It should be as comfortable as we are able to reasonably afford. But again. the Bible is not specific.
 - c. Should we have bulletins? Should we put the hymn numbers on the wall? Matter of preference.
 - d. For questions like these, we need to make sure that we never violate anything that the

Bible says. But in matters where it doesn't speak at all (e.g., the time the service begins), we should use the wisdom the Lord has given us in nature.

- (i) 1 Cor. 11:14 Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him."
- (ii) 1 Cor. 14:40 "Let all things be done decently and in order."

4. The last question we will deal with this morning is, Is there anything else necessary for a person to have to gain a saving understanding of the Word of God, other than by his reading the Bible itself? Or, to put it another way, "Is there any difference between what the converted and unconverted understand or see in the Word of God?
 - a. Can the unbeliever understand what the Bible says? Yes. There are many biblical scholars who know the Bible better than we will ever know it, simply because they have a greater intellect. Does the devil know and understand the Bible? Yes. Does he understand it better than you and I? Yes. He is a far better theologian. What more is necessary then to have a saving understanding of the Bible?
 - b. Will the unbeliever embrace the Christ who is revealed in the pages of Scripture? No. Why not? It is because he has no desire to.
 - (i) John 3:20 "For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed."
 - (ii) John 6:45 "It is written in the prophets, 'AND THEY SHALL ALL BE TAUGHT OF GOD.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me.
 - (iii) 1 Corinthians 2:9 but just as it is written, "THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD, AND *which* HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN, ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM." 10 For to us God revealed *them* through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. 11 For who among men knows the *thoughts* of a man except the spirit of the man, which is in him? Even so the *thoughts* of God no one knows except the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things freely given to us by God, 2:13 which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual *thoughts* with spiritual *words*. 14 But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. 15 But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no man. 16 For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, THAT HE SHOULD INSTRUCT HIM? But we have the mind of Christ."
 - c. The Spirit of God must change his heart to give him a desire to come to Christ and be saved. Until he does this, the man will have no interest in Christ at all.
5. Next time we will look at: Are our modern translations of the Bible inspired? (Inspiration) How do we know that what we have is what God said? (Transmission, Preservation) Should the Word of God be translated into other languages? (Translation, Bible versions) (1:8) (GH)