

## The Absolute Authority of Scripture

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1. Who has ALL and ABSOLUTE authority in religious matters? Matt 28:18 - Jesus Christ has ALL authority in religious matters, given to him by God, His Father in heaven. Scriptures: Matt 17:1-5; Acts 3:22f; Eph 1:22f; Col 1:18; Heb 1:1f; Matt 7:28f.
2. What did Christ do with His authority? Jesus Christ vested His authority **in His Word** (the Word that He spoke and taught to His disciples). Scriptures: John 12:48-50 (His Word is the authoritative standard for judgment); Heb 1:1, 2; John 5:39, 46; John 8:51; John 17:18. See also Acts 3:22f.
3. To whom did Christ entrust His inspired Word? Christ's all-authoritative Word was given to the apostles by His own mouth and by the Holy Spirit. Scriptures: John 17:3, 8, 14, 18, 20; Luke 10:16; John 13:20; 2 Cor 5:20 (the apostles were ambassadors on behalf of Christ).
4. How did the all-authoritative Word get placed in the hands of the apostles? Through the Holy Spirit whom He sent to them (on the day of Pentecost) after He had ascended. Scriptures: John 14:25-26; John 16:12, 13. According to the revelatory function of the Holy Spirit.
5. Did the apostles receive that all-authoritative Word? Yes! Both the twelve disciples and Paul himself claimed to speak and write the authoritative Word of God under direct inspiration. The Holy Spirit gave it to them, and they delivered it to the saints by preaching it and writing it. Scriptures: Acts 20:20, 27; 2 Pet 1:3; 1 Cor 2:7, 12; Jude 3 (cf. Rom 10:17; John 20:31).
6. Christ's all-authoritative Word was given to the apostles through the Holy Spirit, and the apostles delivered it to the saints through their preaching and writings. The writings that the apostles produced HAVE the authority of Christ attached to them and thus are not just fallible human opinions. See the claims of the apostles in these texts: 1 Cor 15:1-4; 2 Thess 2:15; Eph 3:3, 4; and 1 Cor 14:37. John 12:48 says that it is Christ's Word that would judge them on the Last Day. Revelation 20:11-15 shows that this judging Word was written in books that would be opened at the Last Judgment and used as the standard for judgment. This is very compelling evidence for a closed canon by the time of the AD 70 judgment. Think about the implications of that.

7. Are the words written by the apostles and the apostolically guided New Testament writers sufficient to guide us (*sola scriptura*), or do we need something else such as mother church, the creeds, catechisms or confessions to guide us? Scriptures: 2 Cor 3:4-6; John 20:30-31; Acts 1:1f; Luke 1:3, 4; 2 Pet 1:3; 2 Tim 3:16f; Jude 3 (“the faith” has been delivered - all of it - it is sufficient). cf. Deut 29:29 - He has revealed what we needed. It is sufficient.

8. God emphatically demands respect and obedience for His all-authoritative Word, whether written or oral. This demand is based on His authority that is vested in His Word. Why call Him Lord if we do not what He says? Responsibility to obey Christ and the apostles implies that God’s authority rests upon and is vested in them. Scriptures: 1 Pet 4:11; 1 Cor 4:6; Gal 1:6-9; 1 Cor 1:18ff; John 12:48; 1 Cor 14:37.

9. Can anything be added to that inspired and authoritative Word? No! Scriptures: 2 John 9-11; Gal 1:6-9; Rev 22:18-19; Prov 30:6; Deut 4:2; Matt 15:9.

10. Can anything be subtracted from that inspired and authoritative Word? No! Scriptures: Rev 22:19; Gal 1:6-9; Matt 15:9; Matt 21:23-37.

11. Old Testament examples of God’s demands for respect of His Word: Gen 3:3f; Num 20:8-12; 1 Sam 15:1-28; 2 Sam 6:2-7; Lev 10:1f (see New Testament verification of this idea - Rom 15:4; 1 Cor 10:11; James 5:10; as well as these implications - Rom 11:22; Heb 2:1-4; Heb 10:28-31; Matt 7:21-23).

12. The gospel was the embodiment of that authoritative Word. If that authoritative WORD was not all revealed and confirmed in the apostles’ generation, then it means that the GOSPEL itself was not all revealed and confirmed in their generation, and that the historic Church would need to receive further revelations and confirmations throughout her history to complete the GOSPEL. This would imply that everything written by the Roman Church leaders would have the same authority and inspiration as Scripture. Protestants know this is not the case. That’s why we are Protestants and hold to *Sola Scriptura*.

