

***Sola Scriptura* - Scripture Alone**

After many years of attempting to initiate significant reforms, a formal protest movement began in Germany in October of 1517. Martin Luther, a Catholic priest, led this movement, which would become known as the Protestant Reformation.

One of the chief concerns Luther and other early reformers had been the Catholic practice of elevating traditions to be “equal in binding force” to doctrines strongly supported by Scripture.

The reformers were particularly concerned with common traditions and teachings: infant baptism, purgatory, indulgences, confession through a priest, veneration of Mary, praying to saints, the nature of the Eucharist (transubstantiation vs. consubstantiation), and the Pope as “Vicar of Christ on Earth.” None of these practices and teachings have Scriptural support. They are mere historical traditions of the Catholic church.

The early reformers tried to change the church where they saw it had departed from Scripture. To do so, they did not simply protest what they were against; they developed a five-point template governing what they were for. Chief among their doctrinal development principles was “*Sola Scriptura*,” Latin for, Scripture Alone.

The *Sola Scriptura* principal mandates that for a teaching to be a core church teachings, it must have a strong, clear, biblical foundation. The remaining disputable matters were secondary to doctrine. They could remain traditions but were not to be elevated to the same status as doctrine.

Secondary issues would, in time, be left to denominational leadership to establish as they felt led. The principal goal was to separate Scriptural doctrine from mere traditions.

By the turn of the twentieth century, most mainline Protestant denominations held the same positions on core teachings such as the Trinity, the divinity of Jesus, heaven, hell, the inerrancy of Scripture, salvation, and angels and Satan, and total rejection of papal authority.

There were significant differences of opinion on secondary issues such as interpreting Bible prophecy, understanding the nature and role of the Holy Spirit, women’s roles in ministry, worship structure, music, the method of baptism, and the ordination of priests.

The IAAW ministry believes that in the post-Rapture world, most small groups will not operate under doctrinal guidelines of any pre-Rapture era denominations. Organized religious gatherings will be sanctioned and overseen by the world church, which will be controlled by the devil, not God.

There are some positive aspects to operating without denominations. One of the most important is that there will be limited carry-over of compromised theological positions and practices that have found a foothold in many churches. The disadvantage is that new bodies of believers may struggle to establish core beliefs. The Discipleship Handbook eBook, included in

the Rapture Kit Flash Drive, can help with this – see pages 98-101. It is located in the Section 04 – Books folder.

The primary way to determine what core theological positions are right and true, is to ask, “What does the Bible say?” Human traditions, religion, and political correctness are nonfactors. Does this position or teaching have a strong, clear, biblical foundation? That is the only question. If yes, then it meets the *Sola Scriptura* principle of doctrine and should be accepted.

Teach the Bible. Preach the Word. Let Sola Scriptura—Scripture alone, govern your priorities and focus, and you will honor God and be blessed.