

# GROW IN GRACE

NEWSLETTER

**Volume 45, No. 26, June 26, 2018** / Southside Baptist Church / P.O. Box 1594 / 1028 South Water Avenue, Gallatin, TN 37066 (615) 452-5951 / **The Grow in Grace Newsletter is a WEEKLY Bible Study**, plus local church news notes— designed first and foremost for members and those attending services at Southside Church; and is sent forth with the desire to aid one and all, (including friends far and wide), in the experience of 2 Peter 3:18. ***"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our LORD and Savior JESUS CHRIST. To Him be glory both now and forever. Amen."***

## **THE BIBLE IS UNDER ATTACK!** *by Vincent Nicotra*

Presently, the Bible is under attack from those, both inside and outside the church, who view it as an archaic book with little or no relevance and application for today.

**The fallout of this unbelief in the sufficiency of the Scripture is clearly evident within the churches of today.** Many spend vast amounts of money in vain attempts to entertain their members. Others show their lack of faith in the Word of God by trying to implement business and marketing techniques and church growth tactics, attempting to compensate for a Bible that they view as "insufficient" to do the job.

**Cults add other writings** to the word of God believing that it does not contain all the information needed for salvation and sanctification, and that further revelation from God is available through other sources.

**The Roman Catholic institution** even holds the belief that the traditions of the church are as equally authoritative as the Scriptures.

**In Charismatic circles,** unbelief in the sufficiency of the Scripture results in the constant need for “miracles, signs, and wonders,” believing the gospel to be ineffective without their accompaniment.

**However, far and away the greatest attack against the sufficiency of Scripture has come from the influence of psychology** within the church. Seminaries that once trained pastors how to use the Bible in counseling people, now instruct them in psychology and the wisdom of men. Sin is now treated as a disorder in need of treatment rather than repentance.

**All of this,** coupled with the ever decreasing attention span of the culture, **has caused the church to try to seek ways to entertain its congregations** rather than simply preach the all-sufficient Word of God. The Bible is no longer viewed as authoritative in matters of faith and practice by most. Those who believe in an inerrant, authoritative, all-sufficient Word of God are considered by most to be deluded, misguided, or just plain ignorant.

**What shall we say to these critics and unbelievers?** Is the Bible sufficient? Does it contain everything necessary and binding on our consciences? Does it contain everything God requires of us? (1)

## **The Scriptures Are Sufficient**

The sufficiency of Scripture means that the Scripture contained all the words of God He intended His people to have at each stage of

redemptive history, and that it now contains all the words of God we need for salvation, for trusting Him perfectly, and for obeying Him perfectly. (2)

There are several passages of Scripture which support this view in both the Old and New Testaments. The Nation of Israel was instructed by God to keep His word before them at all times, because it was sufficient to instruct them in how to live according to God's requirements ([Joshua 1:8-9](#); [Deuteronomy 6:4-9](#)).

**In addition the Psalms** are replete with statements speaking of the sufficiency of the written word ([Psalm 1:2](#); [37:31](#); [119:1](#), [89](#), [128](#); etc.). [Psalm 19:7-9](#) is probably one of the clearest statements in all Scripture which speaks to its own sufficiency:

*The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether.*

... One should notice that each title for the scripture is followed by the statement **"of the Lord"**. When it says that the Scripture is perfect, it means "whole", "complete" or "perfect".(3) These words speak for themselves as to the very nature and ability of God's written revelation to keep believers in a right relation to God, if they will but heed them.

**There is nothing about God's word that is deficient.** The psalmist goes on to say in the subsequent verses that in keeping God's law there is great reward. Scripture *alone* is able to restore the soul, make wise the simple, rejoice the heart, and enlighten

the eyes. The words of men may fail, but the word of God *alone* is righteous altogether, and endures forever.

**The evidence of the sufficiency of Scripture is just as clear in the New Testament.** In the Apostle Paul's second letter to Timothy he told him that "From childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings which are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" ([2 Timothy 3:15](#)). Again, the evidence is clear and self-explanatory. Instruction in salvation through faith in Christ comes through the written word of God; Scripture *alone* is sufficient to instruct someone for salvation.

**In addition to these examples, the writer of Hebrews says** that the "Word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword." It is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart and pierce as far as the division of soul and spirit, right down to the very bone ([Hebrews 4:12](#))! **Scripture alone** is sufficient to divide soul and spirit and judge the thoughts and intentions of the human heart.

**Furthermore, James calls the Scriptures** "the perfect law, the law of liberty" ([James 1:25](#)), again speaking of completeness or wholeness. The Apostle Paul told the believers at Thessalonica that they had received the word of God "not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God which also performs its work in you who believe" ([1 Thessalonians 2:13](#)). **Scripture alone is the word of God.** They are not like the words of men. They *alone* are able to strengthen, edify, and transform believers into the image of Christ.

**Finally, in [2 Peter 1:19](#), Peter said that** "We have the prophetic word made more sure, to which we do well to pay attention." The Bible which we hold in our hands contains

everything that pertains to “life and godliness” ([2 Peter 1:3-4](#)). ***It is sufficient in its ability to save and to sanctify, it is inerrant, and infallible, and it is complete as it is. Nothing can substitute for it, nor supplement it, because it contains all that God intends for us to have.*** Because all of this is true of Scripture, it is incumbent upon us to submit to its authority in every area of life.

END NOTES: (1) MacArthur, John, “The Sufficiency of the Written Word,” in *Sola Scriptura*, Edited by Don Kistler, Soli Deo Gloria Publications: Morgan, PA, 1995, page 166. (2) Grudem, Wayne, *Systematic Theology*, Zondervan Publishing House: Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1994, 127. (3) MacArthur, John, *Our Sufficiency in Christ*, Word Publishing: Dallas, Texas, 1991, page 79.

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**The Sufficiency of Scripture** (Adapted from John MacArthur, *Our Sufficiency in Christ* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1998, 2002 Grace Community Church.)

It is significant that one of the biblical names of Christ is Wonderful Counselor ([Isa. 9:6](#)). He is the highest and ultimate One to whom we may turn for counsel, and His Word is the well from which we may draw divine wisdom. What could be more wonderful than that? In fact, one of the most glorious aspects of Christ’s perfect sufficiency is the wonderful counsel and great wisdom He supplies in our times of despair, confusion, fear, anxiety, and sorrow. He is the quintessential Counselor...

### **A Psalm on Scripture’s Sufficiency**

[Psalm 19:7-9](#) is the most monumental and concise statement on the sufficiency of Scripture ever made. Penned by David under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, these three verses offer unwavering testimony from God Himself about the sufficiency of His Word for every situation and thereby counter the teaching of those who

believe that God’s Word must be augmented with truth gleaned from modern psychology.

In this passage [The Holy Spirit through] David makes six statements, each highlighting a characteristic of Scripture and describing its effect in the life of the one who embraces it. Taken together, these statements paint a beautiful picture of the sufficiency of God’s Word.

**1. Scripture Is Perfect, Restoring the Soul.** In the first statement (v. 7), David says, **“The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul.”** ... It conveys the idea of something that is comprehensive, so as to cover all aspects of an issue. Scripture is comprehensive, embodying all that is necessary to one’s spiritual life. David’s implied contrast here is with the imperfect, insufficient, flawed reasoning of men.

**God’s perfect law, David says, affects people by “restoring the soul”** (v. 7)... Scripture is so powerful and comprehensive that it can convert or transform the entire person, changing someone into precisely the person God wants him to be. God’s Word is sufficient to restore through salvation even the most broken life— a fact to which David himself gave abundant testimony.

***Professional psychologists are no substitute for spiritually gifted people, and the counsel that psychology offers cannot replace biblical wisdom and divine power. Scripture Is Trustworthy, Imparting Wisdom***

David further expands the sweep of scriptural sufficiency in [Psalm 19:7](#), writing, **“The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.”** ... The Lord’s testimony is unwavering, immovable,

unmistakable, reliable, and worthy to be trusted. It provides a foundation on which to build one's life and eternal destiny.

**2. God's sure Word makes the simple wise (v. 7)...** [This] evokes the image of a naive person who doesn't know to shut his mind to false or impure teaching. He is undiscerning, ignorant, and gullible, but God's Word makes him wise. Such a man is skilled in the art of godly living: He submits to Scripture and knows how to apply it to his circumstances. The Word of God thus takes a simple mind with no discernment and makes it skilled in the issues of life.

**3. Scripture Is Right, Causing Joy.** In verse 8,... *"The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart."*... The truths of Scripture lay out the proper path through the difficult maze of life. That brings a wonderful confidence. So many people are distressed or despondent because they lack direction and purpose, and most of them seek answers from the wrong sources. God's Word not only provides the light to our path ([Ps. 119:105](#)), but also sets the route before us.

Because it steers us through the right course of life, God's Word brings great joy. **If one is** depressed, anxious, fearful, or doubting, the solution is found not in self-indulgent pursuits like self-esteem and self-fulfillment. **The solution is found in** learning to obey God's counsel and sharing in the resulting delight. Divine truth is the fount of true and lasting joy. All other sources are shallow and fleeting.

**4. Scripture Is Pure, Enlightening the Eyes.** [Psalm 19:8](#) gives a fourth characteristic of Scripture's utter sufficiency: *"The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes."*... Scripture is not mystifying, confusing, or puzzling. God's Word reveals truth to make the dark things light, bringing eternity into

bright focus. Granted, there are things in Scripture that are hard to understand ([2 Pet. 3:16](#)), but taken as a whole, the Bible is not a bewildering book. It is clear and lucid. [MOREOVER, the Holy Spirit who 'breathed out' the Scriptures, lives in EVERY born again Christian and is our MASTER TEACHER, giving understanding, application, and always exalting JESUS CHRIST!]

Because of its absolute clarity, Scripture brings understanding where there is ignorance, order where there is confusion, and light where there is spiritual and moral darkness. It stands in stark contrast to the muddled musings of unredeemed men, who themselves are blind and unable to discern truth or live righteously. God's Word clearly reveals the blessed, hopeful truths they can never see.

***5. Scripture Is Clean, Enduring Forever.*** In [Psalm 19:9](#) David uses the term "fear" as a synonym for God's Word: "*The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever.*" This "fear" speaks of the reverential awe for God that compels believers to worship Him. Scripture, in this sense, is the divine manual on how to worship the Lord... "CLEAN" speaks of the absence of impurity, filthiness, defilement, or imperfection. Scripture is without sin, evil, corruption, or error. The truth it conveys is therefore absolutely undefiled and without blemish.

**Because it is flawless, Scripture endures forever** ([Ps. 19:9](#)). Any change or modification could only introduce imperfection. Scripture is eternally and unalterably perfect. It needs no updating, editing, or refining, for it is God's revelation for every generation. **The Bible was written by the omniscient Spirit of God**, who is infinitely more sophisticated than anyone who dares stand in judgment on Scripture's relevancy for our society, and infinitely wiser than all the best philosophers, analysts, and

psychologists who pass like a childhood parade into irrelevancy. Scripture has always been and will always be sufficient.

**6. Scripture Is True, Altogether Righteous.** Verse 9, “*The judgments of the Lord are true; they are righteous altogether.*” The word “judgments” in this context refers to ordinances or divine verdicts from the bench of the Supreme Judge of the earth. The Bible is God’s standard for judging the life and eternal destiny of every person. **Because Scripture is true, it is “righteous altogether”** ([Ps. 19:9](#)). The implication of that phrase is that its truthfulness produces a comprehensive righteousness in those who accept it.

**Contrary to what many are teaching today, there is no need for additional revelations, visions, words of prophecy, or insights from modern psychology.** In contrast to the theories of men, God’s Word is true and absolutely comprehensive. Rather than seeking something more than God’s glorious revelation, Christians need only to study and obey what they already have. **Scripture is sufficient.**

**PLEASE WATCH THIS,** By Paul Washer, **Indictment 1. Practical Denial of the Sufficiency of Scripture:** (only 7 minutes)

<https://www.sermonaudio.com/playpopupvideo.asp?SID=624181712459>

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**Grace to all! James Bell** [www.southsidegallatin.org](http://www.southsidegallatin.org)

**SOUTHSIDE NEWS NOTES:**

**MONDAYS:** Jail Ministry— First and Second Monday of each month at 7:30pm. Questions? Call the church office at 615-452-5951

**TUESDAYS:** Come and sing every Tuesday night at Gallatin Health Care Nursing Home. Meet at the front door at **5:15PM.**

**WEDNESDAYS:** → **6:30pm— Children Ministry/activities;**

→ 6:30pm— **Youth** Activities and Bible Study— **(Enter doors by gym)**

→ **6:30pm— Wednesday CHURCH PRAYER SERVICE...** (Enter via IRON STEPS; or double doors by gym)

**\*\*\* LADIES BIBLE STUDY— Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, July 3 @ 11:00am; Continuing in LUKE.** ENTER at the back of the church building, [*Doors **open** at 10:30am... The doors are **re-locked** at 11:10am*]

**\*\*\* MEN: EVERY SATURDAY MORNING @ 8am:** Men's Fellowship/Bible Study! **(NEW STUDY: THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN!)** ENTER AT THE back of Church building... under the drive-thru awning. **FELLOWSHIP, Juice, coffee, Hardee's biscuits, & Donuts WAITING, starting at 7:30am!**

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**SUNDAY SERVICES: JULY 2018— 1, 8, 15, 22, 29**

***Sunday School at 9:30am and Worship at 10:45am***

## **SPECIAL NOTES ON SUNDAY SERVICES:**

- 1. July 1, NOON FELLOWSHIP MEAL**
- 2. July 8** at 5:30 pm... FAITHFUL MEN.
- 3. July 15:** LORD'S SUPPER at conclusion of the worship service.  
HOME GROUPS at 5:00pm
- 4. July 22:** Family Integrated EQUIPPING Night  
at 6:00pm— Shepherding a Child's Heart
- 5. July 29: Fifth Sunday Evening Praise & WORSHIP!**