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Sunday, March 11, 2018  
Did You Know?

## Sola Scriptura, Again

R.C. Sproul passed away recently. He was a great theologian of the highest order. I have, in my possession, a handwritten letter that he wrote in response to a theological question I had. I appreciated that he took to time to reply to me. I've also been blessed by the books he has written. In his well-known book *Chosen By God*, he mentions the time when he was a young Christian attending seminary and taking a class under the renowned theologian John Gerstner. He was struggling to accept the doctrine of Calvinism, but soon the evidence was too overwhelming and he wrote a note to himself which he kept it on his desk. It said,

YOU ARE REQUIRED TO BELIEVE, TO PREACH, AND TO TEACH WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS IS TRUE, NOT WHAT YOU WANT THE BIBLE TO SAY IS TRUE.

This is a struggle for every Christian as the Bible does contain some really difficult doctrines such as the Trinity, the incarnation, the problem of evil, predestination, hell, the damnation of those who've never heard and so on. I am the first to admit that these are not easy doctrines to grasp and understand and even believe. The danger I've seen many times with Christians occurs when they decide for themselves which doctrines they will or will not believe. For example, I recently encountered a couple (not in our church) who believed that God would not send people to hell. The wife came across as a borderline universalist -- as one who thinks God would provide a way, apart from Christ, for people to be saved. There are also Christians who are wavering on the issue of the sinfulness of homosexual acts, or even buying into our culture's confused understanding of gender. Pick your poison.

What are the dangers of such an approach to the Bible's doctrines? First, it sets oneself as a higher authority than God. Second, who gets to decide which doctrines we accept and which ones we throw out? And, why should your decision trump my decision? Then, it becomes a free-for-all of personal preference. Instead, we must, with great effort and trust in God's wisdom, continue to believe the words of Paul that "all Scripture is God breathed" -- not just the parts we like, but every part. When we do face difficult doctrines, don't deny it; rather, take a step back, make sure you understand it properly, ask your pastors, humble yourself before God and his Word and ask him for deeper understanding and the willingness to accept his teaching. The rest of Paul's verse says, "...and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." This brings us to the third danger. If we deny any part of God's Word, we will keep ourselves from being thoroughly equipped for God's purposes.

Continue to read the Bible with great humility and a teachable spirit. Accept even the difficult doctrines, trusting that God is all-wise, holy, can do no wrong, and is perfect in all his ways.

Soli Deo Gloria.  
*Pastor Peter*