

Sola Scriptura Debate Cheat Sheet v5

Enhanced with Scriptural Mormonism blog arguments

THE SELF-REFUTATION PROBLEM

Sola scriptura itself is nowhere taught in Scripture. Even Protestant scholars admit this.

Protestant admission (Geisler & MacKenzie): "Sola Scriptura is **not formally stated or taught anywhere in Scripture.**"

The Logic:

- Claims: "Scripture alone is sole authority"
- Must prove this BY Scripture alone (its own standard)
- No Scripture passage teaches this
- ∴ **Fails its own test (self-refuting)**

THE INSCRIPTURATION PROBLEM

Most Devastating Flaw: Sola scriptura couldn't work during apostolic times when Scripture was still being written!

Protestant defender James White admits: "Protestants do not assert that sola Scriptura is a valid concept **during times of revelation.**"

Timeline Reality:

- Paul's letters: 50-67 AD
- Gospels: 60-90 AD
- When Paul wrote 1 Thess (51 AD), **most NT didn't exist**
- When he wrote 2 Tim 3:16-17, **NT canon wasn't complete**

The Paradox: How can Scripture teach a principle that couldn't work while Scripture was being written? If not valid for apostolic Christians, how can it be God's model?

PROTESTANT PROOF-TEXTS FAIL

2 Timothy 3:16-17 - "All Scripture is profitable..."

Why This Fails:

- Paul referred to **OT only** (Timothy knew "sacred writings from childhood")
- "Profitable" ≠ "sufficient alone"
- NT canon wasn't complete when written
- Same logic proves "patience alone" (James 1:4 uses identical language)

1 Corinthians 4:6 - "Not beyond what is written"

Protestant scholars admit textual problems:

- Kevin Vanhoozer: Commentators "express **considerable angst**" over interpretation
- James Moffatt: Phrase is "**beyond recovery**" (textually corrupt)
- Building sola scriptura on this = building on sand

- Context: Paul meant only OT texts he'd just quoted
- Most NT didn't exist (c. 55 AD)
- Paul regularly appealed to oral tradition (2 Thess 2:15)

Revelation 22:18-19 - "Add not to this book"

- "**This book**" (singular) = Revelation only, NOT entire Bible
- Revelation **wasn't last NT book written** chronologically
- OT has identical warnings (Deut 4:2, Prov 30:6) - didn't end revelation then
- Ancient curse formula against **textual corruption**, not cessation of revelation

WHAT THE BIBLE ACTUALLY TEACHES

Scripture + Oral Tradition

2 Thessalonians 2:15: "Hold the **traditions** which ye have been taught, **whether by word, or our epistle.**"

Paul commands BOTH oral AND written teaching. Protestants must nullify this to defend sola scriptura.

Scripture + Church Authority

Matthew 16:19 & 18:18: "Whatsoever thou shalt **bind on earth shall be bound in heaven...**"

Critical rabbinic context: "Binding and loosing" = technical terms for **legislative power to establish doctrine**. Authority beyond Scripture.

Acts 15 - Jerusalem Council: Leadership relied on Peter's authoritative declaration and James's interpretive judgment. Made decision **without clear scriptural precedent** for abolishing circumcision.

Matthew 23:1-3: Jesus commanded following scribes/Pharisees' **authoritative teachings**. Recognition of **non-inscripturated teaching authority**.

NT USES EXTRA-BIBLICAL TRADITIONS

If sola scriptura were true, NT writers violated it constantly!

Verse	Extra-Biblical Source
2 Tim 3:8 - Jannes & Jambres	Jewish Targums (NOT in OT)
1 Cor 10:4 - Rock followed Israel	Targum Onqelos (NOT in OT)
Jude 9 - Michael vs. devil	"Assumption of Moses" (apocryphal)

Paul and Jude treated these as **authoritative**. Bible itself shows Scripture is NOT sufficient alone.

EVEN OT ISRAEL NEEDED CONTINUING REVELATION

Numbers 15:32-36 - The Sabbath-Breaker

Israelites **already had written Sabbath command** (Ex 20:8-11). But they didn't know how to apply it to specific case. Needed **direct revelation through Moses**.

Principle: Even with written Scripture, non-inscripturated guidance "fine tunes" application. If ancient Israel needed this, how much more do we?

OT Reformations Used Non-Scripture Commands

2 Chronicles 29:25: Hezekiah followed "commandment of David, and of Gad the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet." **These commands are nowhere in Scripture**, yet text says "commandment of the LORD."

Josiah's Reform: Consulted prophetess Huldah for interpretation (2 Kings 22), not just rediscovered text.

INTERPRETIVE CHAOS: 33,000+ DENOMINATIONS

If Scripture alone is clear and sufficient:

- Why 33,000+ Protestant denominations all claiming "Bible alone"?
- All disagree on baptism, communion, predestination, salvation
- Each claims "clear passages" support their view

Ephesians 4:11-14: "He gave... apostles and prophets... **Till we all come in the unity of the faith...** That we be no more tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine."

Apostles/prophets exist to bring unity. Have we achieved it? **33,000+ denominations say NO.**

THE PRIESTHOOD PROBLEM

Protestant "Priesthood of All Believers" Fails

Scholar John Elliott's research: 1 Peter 2:9 emphasizes **election and holiness**, NOT priesthood as authority structure for performing ordinances.

Jude 11: "Perished in the **gainsaying of Core [Korah].**"

Korah rebelled claiming "all congregation are holy" (Num 16:3). God destroyed him. Jude uses this as **warning against rejecting proper authority**.

Practical chaos: If everyone has equal authority:

- Can you baptize yourself?
- Can a 5-year-old baptize an adult?
- Can anyone ordain others?

"God is not the author of confusion" (1 Cor 14:33)

PROTESTANT SELECTIVE OBEDIENCE

If you truly believed "Bible alone," why don't you practice these?

Practice	Command	Protestants	LDS
Baptism for dead	1 Cor 15:29	✗ Rejected	✓ Temples
Laying on hands (Holy Ghost)	Acts 8:14-20	✗ Rejected	✓ After baptism
Anointing sick	James 5:14-15	✗ Ignored	✓ By priesthood
Living apostles	Eph 4:11-14	✗ "Ceased"	✓ Quorum of 12

You don't follow Scripture alone. You follow Scripture filtered through Protestant tradition.

THE CANON PROBLEM

The Bible doesn't contain a list of which books are biblical. Church authority determined the canon.

Church Councils:

- Council of Hippo (393 AD)
- Council of Carthage (397, 419 AD)

The Fatal Logic:

- Bible doesn't list which books are Scripture
- Church authority determined the canon
- **If church authority needed to determine canon, it has authority BEYOND canon**
- ∴ Sola scriptura is false

Protestant response: "Church didn't create canon; it recognized canon. Books were self-authenticating."

Counter: If self-authenticating, why 300+ years of disagreement? **By what authority do you trust the Church's recognition?** You're appealing to church authority—contradicts sola scriptura.

THE LDS SOLUTION: LIVING PROPHETS

Biblical Pattern: God worked through prophets for 4,000 years. Why would He stop now?

Amos 3:7: "Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he **revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.**"

Why Living Prophets Solve All Problems:

- **Canon Problem:** Prophets have authority to determine/receive scripture
- **Interpretation Problem:** Prophets provide authoritative interpretation
- **Unity Problem:** One church, one prophet, unified teachings
- **Modern Issues:** Continuing revelation addresses contemporary challenges

Acts 3:19-21: "Whom the heaven must receive **until the times of restitution of all things...**"

"Restitution" = restoration of what was lost. LDS restoration fulfills this prophecy.

DEVASTATING QUESTIONS FOR PROTESTANTS

1. **Where does the Bible teach sola scriptura?** (Even your scholars admit it doesn't)
2. **If Bible alone is sufficient, why pastors, commentaries, theology books?**
3. **If Bible is clear, why do denominations disagree on essentials?**
4. **How do you know which books are Bible without church authority?**
5. **If apostles were only for foundation, why does Eph 4:11-14 say they exist "till we come to unity"?** (We haven't)
6. **If revelation ceased, why does Bible command believers to prophesy?**
(1 Cor 14:1)

7. **Why did Israel with written law still need Moses for applications?**
(Num 15:32-36)

8. **Why did Paul/Jude quote extra-biblical sources as authoritative?**

You cannot answer these within sola scriptura framework.

THE CHOICE

Protestant Position:

- Defend indefensible doctrine nowhere taught in Scripture
- Accept being 1 of 33,000+ contradictory denominations
- No living prophets, no unified authority, no answers for modern challenges

LDS Restoration:

- Living prophets with priesthood authority (biblical pattern restored)
- Continuing revelation (Amos 3:7, John 16:12-13)
- Doctrinal unity under prophetic guidance
- Scripture + Tradition + Church Authority + Living Prophets

Moroni 10:4-5: "Ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost."

Test It: Read the Book of Mormon. Ask God if it's true. If yes, Joseph Smith was a prophet and the LDS Church is Christ's restored church with proper authority.