

The Fatal Flaws of Sola Scriptura – Version 4

Enhanced with Supreme Court Analogy, Essential Doctrines Challenge, Greek *Theopneustos*, Hebrews 1:1 Rebuttal & Selective Tradition Arguments

THE CANON PROBLEM

Which books belong in the Bible? The Bible contains no table of contents.

Jesus Used a DIFFERENT Bible Than Protestants

Two OT Canons in Jesus' Time:

- **Septuagint (LXX):** Greek translation with 46 OT books (39 + 7 deuterocanonicals). Jesus & apostles used this.
- **Hebrew Bible:** ~39 books. Canon not officially closed until AFTER Jesus died.

Proof NT used Septuagint: Protestant scholars Archer & Chirichigno: 340 NT citations from LXX vs. only 33 from Hebrew. Jesus quoted LXX (Mark 7:6-7).

The 7 Missing Books: Tobit, Judith, 1-2 Maccabees, Wisdom, Sirach, Baruch + additions to Esther/Daniel.

Hebrews 11:35 Makes NO SENSE Without 2 Maccabees

Heb 11:35: "Some were tortured, refusing release that they might rise again to a better life"

Where is this story in Protestant OT? It's NOT there. It's in **2 Maccabees 7** (mother & 7 sons tortured, believing in resurrection).

Other NT references to deuterocanonicals: Rom 1 adapts Wisdom 13-14; Matt 11:28-30 echoes Sirach 6:23-30, 51:18-27; James 1:19 = Sirach 5:11.

Protestant OT Follows Rabbis Who REJECTED Jesus

- **Masoretic Text** (Protestant OT basis): Compiled 7th-10th centuries AD—**600-900 years AFTER Christ!**
- **"Council of Jamnia"** (c. 90 AD): Pharisees who rejected Jesus as Messiah discussed Hebrew canon, excluding deuterocanonicals.

Question: Why follow a canon determined by those who denied Christ? The OT Jesus used had MORE books!

Luther Removed Books Christians Used for 1,500 Years

- **Early Church (393-1500 AD):** Councils of Hippo (393), Carthage (397, 419) affirmed 46 OT books. Christians used 73-book Bible for 1,500 years.
- **Luther's 1534 revision:** Removed 7 deuterocanonicals, placed in "Apocrypha" section.
- **By what authority?** His personal preference! Also doubted Hebrews, James ("epistle of straw"), Jude, Revelation.

Who Decided the 27 NT Books?

NT canon developed gradually over 300+ years:

- Churches disagreed on Hebrews, Revelation, James, 2 Peter, 2-3 John, Jude
- Some used Shepherd of Hermas, Epistle of Barnabas, Didache as Scripture
- Athanasius (367 AD): First to list exactly 27 NT books
- Councils confirmed: Hippo (393), Carthage (397, 419)

Church (councils, bishops, tradition) **determined canon.** If Church had authority to determine canon, it has authority beyond canon. Therefore, **Sola Scriptura is false.**

NEW v4: The Selective Tradition Problem

Protestants **accept the 4th-century Council of Carthage/Hippo** for the *list* of NT books, but **reject the SAME Council's teachings** on baptism, the Eucharist, and the priesthood.

The Question: Why is the 4th-century Church "infallible" when listing books, but "apostate" when teaching doctrine? **You can't have it both ways.**

1. SELF-REFUTATION

The Bible never teaches Sola Scriptura.

Protestant Admission: "Sola Scriptura is not formally stated or taught anywhere in Scripture." — Geisler & MacKenzie

2 Tim 3:16-17 Fails:

- Paul referred to **OT only** (NT not yet written)
- "Profitable" ≠ "sufficient alone"
- James 1:4 uses stronger language about patience—does that prove "patience alone"?

NEW v4: The Greek *Theopneustos* Argument

The Greek word *theopneustos* (θεόπνευστος, "God-breathed") is a **hapax legomenon**—used ONLY ONCE in the entire Bible.

The Root Fallacy: Deriving "infallibility" from *theopneustos* is a linguistic error (like assuming "hippopotamus" literally means "river horse"). The word likely means "**life-giving**" (spiritually breathing life into believers), NOT "dictated without error."

Why this matters: You cannot determine a word's meaning only from its root. Context and usage matter—but we have NO other biblical usage to compare!

What Bible Actually Teaches:

- **2 Thess 2:15:** "Hold **traditions** whether by word, or our epistle"
- **1 Tim 3:15:** "The church...**pillar and ground of truth**"
- **Matt 18:17:** "Tell it to the **church**" (not Scripture)

2. CIRCULAR REASONING

Using the Bible to prove the Bible's sole authority is circular.

The Trap: How do you know the Bible is the sole authority? "Because the Bible says so." But you need an **external authority** to establish the Bible's authority—which destroys Sola Scriptura.

3. "SCRIPTURE INTERPRETS SCRIPTURE" FALLACY

Protestant Claim: "Unclear passages explained by clear passages—no church authority needed."

The Problem: YOU decide which passages are "clear," which "unclear," which interprets which.

Example: Does baptism save?

- Mark 16:16: "Baptized shall be saved"
- Acts 16:31: "Believe...and thou shalt be saved"

Which interprets which? **You decide.** That's not Scripture alone—it's **YOUR interpretation alone.**

NEW v4: The "Essential Doctrines" Challenge

Protestants claim the Bible is "clear" on everything essential for salvation.

Ask them: "Can you provide a physical list of the 'Essential Doctrines' required for salvation?"

They cannot. Why? Because:

1. No such list exists in the Bible
2. Protestants disagree on what is "essential" (Is belief in Christ's human will essential? Is the Trinity essential? Is baptism essential?)
3. There is **no authoritative place to get the answer** to "What doctrines are essential?"

Conclusion: If Scripture were truly "clear" on essentials, Protestants would agree on a list. They don't. This proves the need for living prophets.

4. INTERPRETIVE CHAOS

33,000+ Protestant denominations (World Christian Encyclopedia)

All claim: "We follow Scripture alone" + "The Holy Spirit guides us"

Yet disagree on: Baptism, communion, predestination, eternal security, women's ordination, end times, etc.

If Scripture alone were clear, there would be unity. Instead: **chaos.**

NEW v4: The Supreme Court Analogy

The Bible is like a country's Constitution or Law Book. **Laws cannot interpret themselves**—they require a judge to adjudicate between differing interpretations.

The Argument: Without a "Supreme Court" (Living Prophets/Church authority), every citizen (believer) becomes their own final judge, leading to chaos. The text of the law is *static*; the situation is *dynamic*.

Question: What would happen if each defendant in court could interpret the law for themselves? Legal chaos. That's exactly what happens with Sola Scriptura—**33,000 denominations** are the evidence.

5. HISTORICAL IMPOSSIBILITY

Printing press invented 1440—1,400 years after Christ

Before that: Bibles rare, hand-copied, expensive. Most Christians illiterate. Impossible for average person to practice "Scripture alone."

Early Church Fathers affirmed Tradition + Authority:

- **Irenaeus (180):** Heretics misinterpret Scripture; apostolic tradition guards truth
- **Basil (375):** "Some from written teaching; others from tradition...both have same force"

6. PROTESTANT HYPOCRISY

If Protestants truly followed "Bible alone," they would practice ALL biblical commands.

What they SHOULD do but DON'T:

- ✗ Baptism for the dead (1 Cor 15:29)
- ✗ Require apostles' laying on of hands for Holy Ghost (Acts 8:14-20, 19:5-6)
- ✗ Anoint sick with oil (James 5:14-15)
- ✗ Accept living apostles/prophets (Eph 4:11-14 "till we all come to unity")

They don't follow "Scripture alone"—they follow **Scripture filtered through Protestant tradition.**

7. THE BEREAN ARGUMENT (REBUTTED)

Protestant Claim: "Bereans checked Paul against Scripture—proves Sola Scriptura!" (Acts 17:11)

Why This Fails:

- They checked Paul's **oral teaching** (proves Scripture + Tradition)
- They had **authoritative teacher** (Paul the apostle)
- "Scripture" was OT only—still needed Paul to explain
- They **accepted Paul's authority** after verification (v.12)

This is the LDS pattern: verify prophetic teaching against Scripture, then accept living revelation.

NEW v4: Hebrews 1:1 Rebuttal — "God Spoke in Past" Argument

Protestant Claim: Hebrews 1:1 ("God... spake in time past... by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son") proves prophecy has ceased.

The Problem:

1. If Hebrews 1:1 means prophets ceased after Jesus, then **Paul (who wrote AFTER Jesus) was a false prophet.**
2. This interpretation contradicts **Ephesians 3:5**, which says mysteries are "**NOW revealed** unto his holy **apostles and prophets**" (present tense, after Christ).
3. Ephesians 4:11-14 says Christ gave apostles/prophets "**till we all come in the unity of the faith**"—have we achieved unity? No. 33,000+ denominations prove we still need prophets.

Conclusion: Hebrews 1:1 doesn't close the canon or end prophecy. It affirms Christ as the ultimate revelation, but *through* His authorized apostles and prophets.

PROTESTANT SELECTIVE OBEDIENCE: SUMMARY

Biblical Practice	Command	Protestant	LDS
Baptism for dead	1 Cor 15:29	✗ Rejected	✓ Temples
Laying on of hands (Holy Ghost)	Acts 8:14-20; 19:5-6	✗ Rejected	✓ After baptism
Anointing sick with oil	James 5:14-15	✗ Mostly ignored	✓ Priesthood
Baptism at age of accountability	Mark 10:14-15; Acts 16:15, 33	✗ Infant baptism (many)	✓ Age 8
Living apostles/prophets	Eph 4:11-14	✗ "Ceased"	✓ Twelve Apostles
Apostolic succession	Acts 1:20-26; 1 Tim 4:14	✗ Rejected	✓ Restored

Conclusion: Protestants ignore clear biblical practices. This is NOT Sola Scriptura—it's **selective obedience based on tradition.**

THE LDS SOLUTION

Living Prophets = Biblical Pattern

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

Eph 4:11-14: Christ gave apostles and prophets "**till we all come in the unity of the faith**"

Question: Have we achieved unity? **No.** 33,000+ denominations prove we haven't.

Conclusion: We still need apostles and prophets.

Acts 3:21 — The Restoration

"The times of **restitution of all things**"—prophecy of restoration of apostolic authority through Joseph Smith.

Why LDS Authority Solves Everything

- **Canon Problem:** Prophets determine Scripture + receive new revelation
- **Interpretation:** Living prophets provide authoritative interpretation
- **Unity:** One prophet = doctrinal unity (not 33,000 opinions)
- **Modern Issues:** Continuing revelation addresses contemporary challenges

THE DEVASTATING QUESTIONS

For Protestants:

1. Where does the Bible teach Sola Scriptura? (It doesn't—even your scholars admit it)
2. Which books belong in the Bible? Who decided? (Church councils—not Scripture alone)
3. Why follow a canon from Jews who rejected Jesus 600-900 years after Christ?
4. How do you explain Hebrews 11:35 without 2 Maccabees?
5. If Scripture is clear, why 33,000+ denominations with opposite interpretations?
6. By what authority do you dismiss baptism for the dead, laying on of hands, etc.?
7. If you trust the Church's authority to give you the Bible, why reject its authority to interpret it?
8. **NEW v4:** Why do you accept the 4th-century Council's authority on the canon, but reject its teachings on baptism and the Eucharist?
9. **NEW v4:** Can you provide a biblical list of "Essential Doctrines" required for salvation? (You can't—there isn't one)
10. **NEW v4:** If laws need judges to interpret them, why doesn't Scripture need living prophets to interpret it authoritatively?

St. Augustine's Challenge

| "I would not believe in the Gospel, had not the authority of the Catholic Church already moved me."

LDS Position: A church was needed to organize the canon—but that authority was later lost through apostasy. The true church with proper priesthood authority was **restored through Joseph Smith.**

Sola Scriptura Cheat Sheet v4 | Created November 2025 | **Scripture + Living Prophets = Doctrinal Unity** | Scripture Alone = Interpretive Chaos