

Rooted

in the soil of a
vibrant, growing faith

Sermon-Based Study Guide
Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church

2 Kings 22:1-13; & chapter 23
Saturday, April 6 & Sunday, April 7

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I. Connecting With One Another

What was your first memory of Scripture (the Bible) growing up? When did you first encounter God's written word?

II. Introduction to this Series and Study

In the 16th century what is now called the Protestant Reformation took place. A young monk named Martin Luther, and several contemporaries, "rediscovered" Scripture and its core theological truths. When they compared these truths of Scripture with the actions of the Church they concluded that change was needed. So Luther and others sought to "reform" the Church according to God's word. This reform was not welcomed and Luther and the other reformers—and their followers—were compelled to start afresh. This eventually led to the formation of new denominations and new declarations of what these emerging churches believed.

They identified five essentials for the faith that they could not compromise: *Sola Scriptura*—Scripture Alone, *Solus Christus*—Christ Alone, *Sola Gratia*—Grace Alone, *Sola Fide*—Faith Alone, and *Soli Deo Gloria*—To the Glory of God Alone. These are the "official" five, but we will also be asking "What does this mean for us as the Church?" *Sola Ecclesia*?

While the issues that caused the Reformers to lift up the *Solas* may be different today, the importance of the *Solas* as boundaries of authentic, biblical Christian faith remains the same.

This week we "rediscover" the concept of *Sola Scriptura*, the idea that the Bible alone is inspired by God, is authoritative for faith and life, and is infallibly true.

III. Study the Text

- a. Read 2 Kings 22:1-13 and 23:1-3. What did King Josiah, in the midst of his renovation of the temple, rediscover? Why do you think it had been lost?

Note: This book may have been the entire Pentateuch (Gen—Deut) or just the book of Deuteronomy.

- b. Read 2 Kings 23:4-25. How did Josiah respond once the "Book of the Covenant" had been read and the covenant renewed? What did he have done? Why?
- c. Read Psalm 19:1-6. What revelation of God does creation/nature provide? What experiences have you had with this "general" revelation?
- d. Read Psalm 19:7-11. These verses describe the benefits of knowing and keeping the "law" of God, God's "special" revelation to us. How is God's word described? What benefits does it provide?
- e. Read 2 Timothy 3:14-17. What advice does the apostle Paul have for Timothy? What does it mean that Scripture is "God-breathed"? What is it "useful" for?
- f. Read 2 Peter 1:20-21. According to Peter, what role did the Holy Spirit have in the writing of Scripture? Why does this matter?

IV. Reflect and Respond

- a. When Josiah found the record of God's laws that had been lost, drastic changes were made to bring the kingdom in line with God's commands. Today you have God's Word at your fingertips. How much change must you make in order to bring your life into line with God's Word?
- b. Think about the role of Scripture in your life. How has it refreshed your soul...made you wise...given joy to your heart...given light to your eyes? (Psalm 19:7-8) Additionally, how has Scripture taught you...rebuked you...corrected you...trained you...equipped you for good works? (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
- c. The authority of Scripture is often contested today. Many people (even Christians) wish to see Scripture as *an* authority but not *the* authority. Things such as tradition, reason, experience, and popularity are often given the same weight as Scripture. How can the Church acknowledge the influence of these other items while still giving Scripture the ultimate authority? What would you say to someone who felt this way?
- d. Should knowing the Bible you hold in your hands is "God-breathed" affect how you approach it? How?

V. Spend some time in prayer:

- a. Pray for the Holy Spirit to help you, the members of Good Shepherd, its leaders and pastors, stand under the authority of Scripture (be rooted in it!), knowing it to be sufficient for our life and faith.
- b. Pray for our church's discernment process, and the processes of the other churches in our presbytery, that we might know and follow the will of God.
- c. Pray as you are led for the people in our church family: the children...teens...singles...couples...seniors...of what needs are you aware? Bring them before our loving Lord.
- d. Say "thank you" to God for whatever blessings are overflowing your heart.

Reflect on this Quote as it relates to Reading Scripture...

"On the whole, I do not find Christians, outside of the catacombs, sufficiently sensible of conditions. Does anyone have the foggiest idea what sort of power we so blithely invoke? Or, as I suspect, does no one believe a word of it? The churches are children playing on the floor with their chemistry sets, mixing up a batch of TNT to kill a Sunday morning. It is madness to wear ladies' straw hats and velvet hats to church; we should all be wearing crash helmets. Ushers should issue life preservers and signal flares; they should lash us to our pews. For the sleeping god may wake someday and take offense, or the waking god may draw us out to where we can never return. " --Annie Dillard

