

HHBC Value Statements – Week 2 – September 29th, 2013
Submitting to the Authority of Scripture

Week two of our church wide study on the renewed values of our church brings us to the value we place on Scripture as a body of believers as we submit to its authority. Henderson Hills describes submitting to the authority of Scripture in this way:

We value the sufficiency of Scripture in every aspect of our lives.

I. Description: Practically, our church sees this value displayed in four distinct areas:

*Believing God Word is truth, both inerrant and sufficient
Learning the truths of Scripture
Proclaiming the word of God
Reforming continually (“Semper Reformanda”)*

II. Introductory Questions:

Let’s begin our discussion about the authority of Scripture in our lives with a couple of questions:

First, how does the world view the Bible, and what can that view teach us about how we as believers in Christ look at the word of God?

Second, if you think about the Bible from beginning to end, how would you describe its overall message?

And with that in mind, why should we openly acknowledge that there are parts of the Bible that we don’t understand or don’t seem to fit this message?

III. Discussion and Application:

Scripture is miraculous in that it contains the Words of God given to man. Thus, we believe as a church body that the word of God is authoritative and that God will use Scripture in our lives for His purposes and glory. As that is the case, let’s discuss what the importance of the Word of God in our lives.

1. Believing God’s Word is truth, both inerrant and sufficient (2 Peter 1:16-21)

Our church believes in the totality of Scripture – that it is truth, without blemish or falsehood, and sufficient for all of our needs. In the passage we read and see that Peter openly testifies to being a physical witness to Jesus and to hearing God speak to Christ.

- *In verses 19-21, how does Peter describe Scripture? What can we gather that Peter believed about Scripture even after he was a physical witness during Jesus’ time on earth?*

How does Peter’s analogy of Scripture being “a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts” help us understand how God’s word is sufficient for every part of our lives?

Peter states that Scripture was brought about as “men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit”, How can this simple verse about God’s Word be a great encouragement to us as we pursue God through Scripture?

2. Learning the truths of Scripture (Psalms 25:1-5)

If we believe Scripture is true, without error, and sufficient, then we will desire to seek God and learn the truth of Scripture. This is an action of faith because we truly believe that God will teach us truth as we seek in His Word.

- *What can we tell about what the Psalmist believes about God and his relationship with God as we read the first three verses? What does the Psalmist cry out for in verses 4 and 5? What is the Psalmist's desire? Would you consider the Psalmist's desires more passive or active? Why?*

What are the implications for our intimacy with our Father and our spiritual growth in reading this passage?

3. Proclaiming the Word of God (2 Corinthians 4:1-6)

As we begin to believe what Scripture says in the midst of learning the truthfulness of it, God also calls us to proclaim His word to others.

As we read the first 4 verses of this passage, Paul communicates that the ministry he does is only by the mercy of God, and he states that he refuses to trick people into believing the Gospel.

- *In reading this passage, what can we gather is Paul's priority in his ministry? Why do we know it is not to simply "save people" by any means necessary?*

How would you describe what Paul believed about ministering to the needs of others and his responsibility to proclaim the Word of God?

In verse 5, why is it important for us to understand and live out Paul's words that say "For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake"?

4. Reforming continually ("Semper Reformanda") (1 Timothy 4:7-13)

Being active in our pursuit of Christ and His Kingdom reflects our belief that His Word is true, inerrant, and sufficient. The Holy Spirit will lead us to learn the truth of Scripture and proclaim it as well.

But our prayer is that we should never be satisfied and content with where God has us in our pursuit of Him. We are called to strive after Him and continue to pursue Him on a daily basis in an active way.

Why is Paul's analogy of the Christian life being like training our bodies so accurate? In what ways are those two activities very much alike, and how do the effects of those trainings prove the analogy true?

- *Why is the Christian life often "toil and strife"? In what ways does this phrase properly capture the essence of the Christian life?*
- *How does this passage properly convey the active and continual and constant growth Christians should be experiencing as they pursue God?*

Bible Scriptures:

1. Believing God's Word is truth, both inerrant and sufficient (2 Peter 1:16-21)

16 For we did not follow cleverly devised stories when we told you about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in power, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. 17 He received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." 18 We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain. 19 We also have the prophetic message as something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. 20 Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. 21 For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

2. Learning the truths of Scripture (Psalms 25:1-5)

1 In you, Lord my God, I put my trust. 2 I trust in you; do not let me be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me. 3 No one who hopes in you will ever be put to shame, but shame will come on those who are treacherous without cause. 4 Show me your ways, Lord, teach me your paths. 5 Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long.

3. Proclaiming the Word of God (2 Corinthians 4:1-6)

1 Therefore, since through God's mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. 2 Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God. 3 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. 4 The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. 5 For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. 6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ.

4. Reforming continually ("Semper Reformanda") (1 Timothy 4:7-13)

7 Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly. 8 For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come. 9 This is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance. 10 That is why we labor and strive, because we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all people, and especially of those who believe. 11 Command and teach these things. 12 Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. 13 Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching.