
EQUIP

Sufficiency – Small Group Session Three
Week beginning 7th May



Do we need more?

We have been thinking about God's word over the last two sessions. In the first session we saw that the whole of Bible is God's word - Jesus confirms the Old Testament and guarantees the New Testament. Because the Bible is God's word, we believe it is true in all it intends to say and it comes with the authority of God.

In our second session, we asked 'how we can understand God's word for ourselves?' We saw that we need to go back to the original 'Bible Writers' and ask: (1) What did they actually say? (2) What does it really mean? and then, (3) How does it apply to us as New Testament Christians living in the last days?

But this week we come to another question about the Bible and it is this - 'do we need any more revelation from God other than the Bible'? I wonder what you think? Do we need other words from God and should we expect other words from God? After all, the Bible is full of examples of God speaking in lots of different ways, so should we listen in other places as well?

This is a big question and one that evangelical Christians can sometimes think differently about. What evangelical Christians agree on is that God can speak in any way He likes, but He will never say anything that contradicts His word in the Bible. God's word in the Bible has ultimate authority.

Whilst I imagine we all would agree with that, we can probably go a little bit further. To put it in a direct way, we might say 'God doesn't need to say anything else; in the Bible He has already said everything we need.'

Well, before we turn to God's word, maybe discuss this issue for a moment. What do you think of this idea? How does it relate to your experience? What do you think of the suggestions made above. Then, having started to think about the ideas here, pray for God's help as we come to His word.

"But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed."

Galatians 1:8-9

A Sufficient Word

1 Is the Bible all the revelation we need?

So we are asking if we need more revelations from God than we have in the Bible. We are going to look at three wonderful passages about the nature of God's revelation. They come at the issue in different ways. Spend maybe 5-7 min exploring each passage in turn. Then try to sum up where you have got to as a group.

Passage One: 2 Timothy 3:13-17. Especially consider what the scriptures do.

Passage Two: Hebrews 1:1-4. Consider especially the tenses in verses 1-2.

Passage Three: John 1:14,8, 14:9-10, 17:6-8. What are we told about the revelation in Jesus?

How might you summarise what we are learning here?

2 All we need...

What we have seen in those verses is that the revelation we have in Jesus, recorded in the scriptures, is all we need for life and salvation. In Jesus, God has fully revealed Himself and his great plan for the world. This is called the doctrine of sufficiency of the scriptures. They are sufficient for salvation and living as Christians.

This truth is summarised in the great statements of faith of old. For example in 1561 the Belgic Confession said, "We believe that those Holy Scriptures fully contain the will of God, and that whatsoever man ought to believe unto salvation is sufficiently taught therein."

Reflect for a moment on this truth, spend 5-7 mins on each of these questions:

How might this be reassuring for our Christian lives?

How might it challenge the way we think about the Bible?

How might it help us when we meet with others who want to add new truths in addition to what we find in the Bible?

3 Prayer and Action

Do remember what we said at the the beginning of our session; God is God and He can speak at any time in any way He likes. It is, however, such a blessing that God has already said everything we need Him to say for our Christian lives and He has recorded that in a book that we can have on our phones all the time!

Share one way these weeks have challenged you. Maybe share one practical thing you want to do differently as a result of these weeks. Then, having shared your thoughts, why not pray that God's Spirit would help us put those things into practice.

