

S U M M E R 2 0 0 3 I S S U E

SOLA SCRIPTURA

AFFIRMING THE AUTHENTICITY, ACCURACY, AND AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE

STORM APPROACHING

STORM-PROOF
YOUR FAMILY

THE PROBLEM AND
THE SOLUTION

FOUNDATIONS

GOT BIBLE?

INTERVIEW WITH MARQUIS LAUGHLIN

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SOLA SCRIPTURA

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Sola Scriptura magazine is a publication of Sola Scriptura, a non-profit ministry that is devoted to affirming the authenticity, accuracy, and authority of the Bible—the standard for truth.

The pages of *Sola Scriptura* are designed to be evangelistic and pastoral in nature: evangelistic in that the magazine is dedicated to proclaiming and defending the historic gospel of Jesus Christ; pastoral in that the magazine is committed to equipping and encouraging believers through sound biblical teaching.

"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness..." (2 Timothy 3:16)

"In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following." (1 Timothy 4:6)

"Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints." (Jude 3)

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From the Front Lines

Scott Pierre, Executive Director

As of this writing, the war in Iraq has been going on for twenty days. If you are at all like I am, then you, too, have been fascinated by the televised reporting of the war. Thanks to the inclusion of embedded reporters, never has there been such intense exposure during wartime. Satellite videophones, computers and other technological advances have allowed the American public to receive ongoing up-to-date, even minute-by-minute reports. One has never been so close to the action on the front lines nor has one seen, in such real-time and graphic effect, the activities of our soldiers as they move on the battlefield. In many senses it is like watching a movie at the theater, but with the understanding that there is a major difference: This

is true reality TV, not the contrived stuff that has become a popular mainstay of our prime-time culture. This reality exposes us to truth... the truth of men and women who are placing their lives on the line in an attempt to overthrow a corrupt dictator and free an oppressed people. The embedded reporters are exposing it all just as it happens, without the illusions of make-up artists, contrived camera angles, or lengthy scene set-ups.

As I considered this amazing phenomenon, I had a thought. Imagine for a moment that it was possible to embed a reporter into our inner being. I know, a little bit sci-fi, but hang with me for a moment. I began to wonder about the content of the live reports that would be broadcast to the national media from within our own hearts and minds. What might those reports say? Whoa...did that

thought just grab you like it grabbed me? As the embedded reporter observes the ongoing war between the flesh and the spirit within us, might these reports reveal fleshly weapons of mass destruction? Lust? Greed? Pride? Such weapons destroy our ability to live Christ-like lives and to bring glory to our God. Paul cautions us in Romans 8, saying "the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God." Or might the stories reported reflect the half-hearted or hypocritical life of one who talks the talk, but miserably fails to walk the walk? In 2 Timothy 3, Paul describes these as ones "holding to a form of godliness,

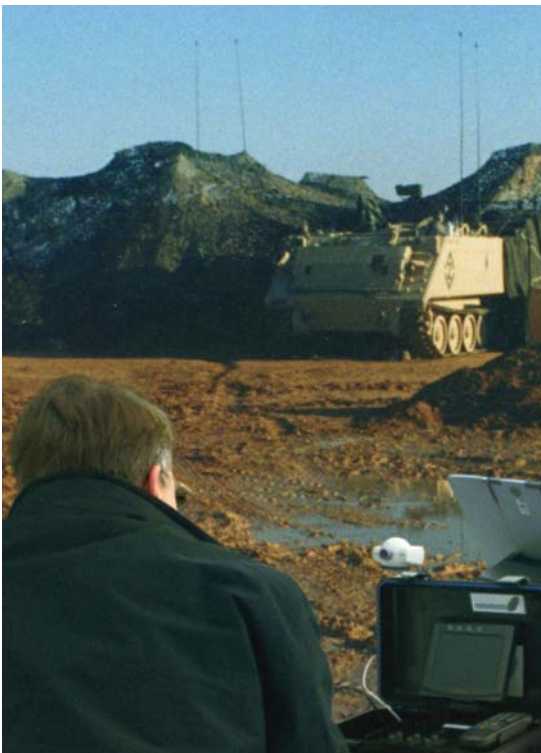
although they have denied its power... always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." (Kind of like the Iraqi Minister of Information broad-

casting live from Baghdad that the Americans are being pushed back 100 miles away while the American tanks are rolling down the street behind him.) On the other hand, might the reports say, as God did of Job in Job chapter one, "Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil?"

Oh, that we might be a people who live blameless and upright lives. Oh, that the embedded reporter within us would broadcast, loud and clear, the personal purity and humility that exemplifies our Savior.

It is the desire of Sola Scriptura to encourage you to become a people who are willing to deny the calling of the flesh and to become arrested by the truth of God's glorious Word. To do this, we are focusing this issue on the proper foundations for godly living. Specifically, you will read Ken Ham's clear and thought provoking perspective on the problems within our culture and the solutions that we need to counter them. James MacDonald provides an insightful piece on establishing a foundation of truth for our loved ones in his article, "Storm-Proof Your Family." And, an interview with Marquis Laughlin will provide valuable information on ways to more effectively read and memorize Scripture.

As you think of the embedded reporter in your own being, observing and reporting the latest breaking news, what will your top story be? ■





stomach pros

By James MacDonald

We live in a culture that says, "It really doesn't matter what you believe as long as you are sincere." Have you heard that before?

Nothing could be further from the truth. As we were painfully aware on September 11, 2001, Arab Islamic terrorists hijacked four U.S. planes and wickedly crashed them, taking thousands of innocent people with them.

Difficult though it may be, I want you to try to picture for a moment in your mind's eye the final seconds before impact. What were those terrorists thinking? What was going through their minds in the last few moments?

Well, if you think that their eyes were filled with terror, they weren't. If you think that their mouths were drawn in horror, you'd be wrong. Anyone who understands their deviant brand of religion knows that they were probably grinning from ear-to-ear because they



mom of

*Your
Family*

believed that they were dying in service to Allah. They were expecting to wake up in paradise, to receive a harem of many women, to experience eternal bliss, and to see the very face of Allah.

Instead, they woke up in hell, received God's wrath and now are experiencing eternal torment. In fact, no doubt they saw the very face of Satan. Sincere, but sincerely wrong. So the next time somebody says to you, "It doesn't matter what you believe only that you believe something," just say, "Wrong! It matters incredibly what you believe!"

Now, bring it home. Many families with great sincerity are flying out-of-control and grinning ear-to-ear, yet in only a few weeks or months, they will suddenly crash and perhaps never recover. They say, "We are sincere people. We love our kids and are doing the best we can." But sincerity alone can destroy you, too. The issue is not how much you care or how hard you work for your family. The question is, on what are you basing your judgments? What system of belief is informing the decisions you make and the actions you take? If you are not building your life and your family life on the truth, then you are headed for a big-time crash no matter how sincere your intentions may be.

Do you want your family to survive? Do you want your marriage to stand strong in the crazy storms of life? Strong families are built on the truth of God's Word. Jesus said so Himself:

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine, and acts upon them, may be compared to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock ("Truth"). And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded upon the rock. And every one who hears these words of Mine, and does not act upon them, will be like a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and yet it fell, and great was its fall" (Matthew 7:24-27).

There are two kinds of families: those who are building on the truth—the rock; those who are not building on the truth—the sand.

Now building on the sand can be pretty tempting. First of all, it's easy and it looks good on the outside. It frees up a lot of time for other stuff. Building your house on the rock—the truth—takes focus and hard work. It feels like a big hassle sometimes and it doesn't look any better most of the time. That is, until the storms come.

Notice this—both families encounter storms. The one built on the sand fell and "great was its fall" (v. 27). Total, sudden devastation. The house founded on the rock—on truth—stood.

Do you want your family to weather the tough times? Like the ones you're facing right now? Get your family anchored on

Storm-Proof Your Family

*What system
is informing the
decisions you make
the actions you*

the truth. I love 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable" for these four things:

- Teaching (doctrinal truth about God, salvation, money, work, family, etc.)
- Reproof (the Bible points out the error of our ways)
- Correction (the Bible also shows us the right stuff.)
- Training in righteousness (not just what to do, but how to do it, the right course of action and how to get there).

Time to live it out. Build your home on the rock of God's truth by applying these ideas:

1. Start a regular time of family Bible reading and prayer.

Say, "From now on Monday nights at our house, we get the Book open. Right before or after dinner, we spend some time praying together."

2. Memorize a portion of God's Word as a family.

Just say, "We are a newly married couple and we are going to build our home on the truth. Let's just start memorizing God's Word together." Psalm 127 and Ephesians 6 would be good places to start. If your kids are small, have a contest to learn the books of the Bible together. Give a prize at the end. Make them good prizes, Dad. Don't be cheap!

3. Read the Bible together in a year. Talk about it as you go and encourage each other.

*of belief
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make and
take?*





There are two kinds of families: those who are building on the truth—the rock; those who are not building on the truth—the sand.

4. Get an audio series for the family. Sit down on Tuesday nights and open your Bibles, listen to a message, take notes, discuss and pray about it afterwards.

5. Make decisions about family matters from the Bible. If you're facing a big decision, ask your pastor, "Where is a passage we could read that would really help us make this decision?"

6. Turn off the television and read a Bible story out loud with enthusiasm! "Hey kids, you think that's good? Listen to this!" Let them see that Mom and Dad are fired up about God's truth. Same thing at bedtime. Don't just pray with your kids, get the Bible open. Read a little bit and talk about it.

7. Choose family values and post them at home. When we moved into our home we had our family values painted on our living room wall where our whole family can see them. These are ours—you can write and post your own:

- *Love God.* How straight up is that? Right? Big surprise. What is the greatest commandment? "Love the Lord your God with all your heart," Matthew 22:37.
- *Family first.* "Don't talk to your sister like that." "That's your mother!" "We are together in this." Loyalty.

- *Work hard.* "This is your home, too. Put in the extra effort."

- *Tell the truth.* Even when it's hard. Even when it's going to get you into more trouble. Just get the truth on the table. God can do a lot with that.

- *Be kind.* "We are not going to talk about them like that. That is not kind."

Why should you do this? Second Timothy 3:17: so "that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work." You could even say, thoroughly equipped for the storms. God's Word contains all the truths we need to be thoroughly equipped for whatever life brings. Build your family on the rock. ■



Dr. James MacDonald is the founding pastor of Harvest Bible Chapel in Rolling Meadows, IL and radio Bible teacher on *Walk in the Word* (walkintheword.com) which emphasizes the precise exposition of God's Word and its practical life application. James and his wife Kathy have three children—Luke, Landon, and Abigail—and reside in the northwest suburbs of Chicago.

A Tale of Two Castles

*By
Ken Ham*

Look around at today's society and you'll find an increase in homosexual behavior, support for abortion, disobedience to authority, the lack of a work ethic, divorce rates, nudity, and pornography, to name just a few. You'll also find that the Church, by and large, is not as effective as it used to be: evangelists don't get the same response today that they used to get, people don't automatically send their children to Sunday School like they used to, etc. What has happened in society to bring about this change? Why is it that many people today just scoff when you talk about Christ and don't seem to be open to the Gospel? What's the problem facing the Church?...

The Problem

Psalm 11





his castle illustration sums up the problem in our Western culture from a Christian perspective. The left castle has a **foundation of evolution** (and/or millions of years)—a foundation that really teaches that man by himself determines truth. Out of this foundation comes a castle called ‘humanism’ and the consequences that can arise from such a foundation, e.g., abortion, homosexual behavior, etc. Again, evolution or millions of years is not the cause of these social ills, but provides a foundation for people to justify these behaviors.

On the right we see the castle of Christianity, built on the **foundation of the absolute authority of the Word of God**. Out of this structure comes a Christian worldview (Christian morality/right and wrong, marriage, sanctity of life, etc.).

The humanists are very clever—they know that to effectively attack Christianity, they shouldn’t aim their guns directly at the doctrines of the Resurrection or the Virgin Birth. This would be too obvious. Besides, this is just attacking the structure. **To destroy Christianity, you have to try to destroy the foundation of God’s Word.**

The best way to accomplish this is to bombard the history that is foundational to all Christian doctrine. Because the history in Genesis 1–11 is foundational to every single Christian doctrine, the humanists have decided to direct their fire at this foundation.

Through the teaching of millions of years, evolution, and so on, humanists have been able to convince many that the Bible’s history can’t be trusted—that the Bible is not credible, and therefore is not the absolute authority. The more this kind of thinking permeates a culture, the more people’s actions will begin to become consistent with the humanist foundation that man determines truth. Thus ultimately the Christian structure will begin to collapse and the humanist structure will become entrenched in its place.

Sadly, **many Christians are helping to destroy their own foundation** by accepting millions of years and/or evolutionary ideas that undermine the history in Genesis 1–11 and therefore undermine the absolute authority of God’s Word. By teaching that you can accept millions of years, these Christians have ‘unlocked the door’ that tells people that they can reinterpret the Word of God on the basis of outside ideas. This will eventually lead to a destruction of biblical authority.

At the same time, these Christians are recognizing that there is something dreadfully wrong. They are trying to fight the humanists and attempting to deal with the increasing problem of the social ills in the culture such as abortion, homosexual behavior, pornography, lawlessness and so on. But what most Christians don’t seem to understand is that **these social ills are not the problems** in the culture, but are in fact, the symptoms of the problem: a change in foundation from the authoritative Word of God to man’s opinions determining truth.

This change occurring in society has resulted in a culture shift from a Christian worldview to a secular one. It is important to understand that this change has been a foundational one—the change has been from the bottom up, not from the top down. Thus, if you want to be successful in turning the culture around to return to a Christian worldview, it has to be a change from the ground up, not the top down. In other words, even though Christians need to take a stand against the evils of abortion, homosexual behavior and so on (and they need to make this known in the culture), **if they don’t deal with the foundational reason** why these issues are such problems in the culture, they will ultimately fail in their battle against the onslaughts of evolutionary humanism.

Note that when the foundation from God’s Word was the one that was primarily accepted in the culture and you preached about sin, Jesus, and trusting in the Lord God of the Bible, most people would understand the message. But now the culture has had a major shift to a different foundation—where man by himself determines truth, and life is only a result of natural processes over millions of years. As a result, people who have built their thinking on this foundation no longer understand the message of sin and repentance and God’s law, etc. To reach these people, you would have to get them to change their thinking foundationally. In other words, they need to destroy the wrong foundation on which they have built their thinking, and **establish the right foundation from God’s Word, beginning with Genesis as real history**. These people need to be shown the fallacies of the evolutionary theory of origins; they need to be shown that scientists have not proven that the Earth is billions of years old, etc. Instead, people need to be shown that the Bible’s history—beginning in Genesis—is credible and that it does fit with real science and connects to the real world in every area.

The Solution

Isaiah 58:1-2



"Millions of Years" = Man is Authority

"Six Days" = God is Authority



his diagram illustrates the solution to the problem portrayed in the first illustration. As previously mentioned, the solution is not just **to fight social ills**, but to also deal with the foundational nature of societal change that has resulted in such issues becoming prevalent in the culture.

The Christian's primary aim shouldn't be simply to go out and try to change the culture, but instead should be **to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ and see people converted, committed to the Lord, and building their thinking on biblical principles**. These people will then develop a Christian worldview and be the salt and light in the culture, which then results in cultural change.

But when the Gospel of Jesus Christ is preached to a culture that has a secular foundation, the general result is scoffing because of the belief that science has proven that the Bible is not credible. They ask questions challenging the history of the Bible: Where did God come from? Where did the Bible come from? Where did Cain get his wife? What about the billions of years? How did Noah get all the animals on the Ark? How could there be enough water to cover the earth for a global flood?... And so on.

When Christians are **trained to give answers** (1 Peter 3:15) that show the Bible's history is true, explains real science, makes sense of the real world, and is therefore authoritative, then many have their hearts opened by the Holy Spirit, and they listen to the rest of God's Word and the Gospel.

Thus the solution to the collapse of the Christian worldview in our Western culture is **to restore the foundation that is the authority of the Word of God**, which begins with the historical account of Genesis 1-11. This counteracts the world's teachings that undermine Scriptural authority and also reveals the bankruptcy of evolutionary and 'millions of years' ideas. In doing this, we are dealing foundationally with the shift that has occurred in our culture, while also standing firm on the Christian morality of the Bible by letting the world know about the evils of abortion, homosexual behavior, etc. This observation also relates to evangelism. More and more, Christians today cannot simply go out and tell non-Christians to "trust in Jesus and repent of your sin," because they no longer understand the meaning of sin or who Jesus is. In other words, there are increasing numbers of people in our Western culture who have been taught a different, wrong history of the world and therefore don't even understand that they are lost, let alone that they need to be saved.

Where do you stand?

CONSIDER YOUR VIEWS ON THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS:

- § Abortion should be permitted when the life of the mother is threatened.
- § A person's sexual orientation is determined genetically at birth.
- § The preciousness of human life makes the death penalty an unacceptable form of punishment.
- § Love and tolerance are the best responses to confrontation and problems.
- § Genetic cloning is okay if its primary purpose is to reduce birth defects and cure disease.
- § Civil disobedience is permitted when one feels their conscience has been violated.
- § The Bible should be the only guide for determining the rule of law in America.
- § Pornography should be protected by the government as long as it is limited to adults.

Your position on these issues indicates whether you have a biblical or a secular worldview.

For additional information and Scriptural perspective on these issues, visit our website:

www.solagroup.org

Foundations

Dr. Dan Hayden

Maneuvering around a mound of dirt, I picked my way cautiously down the rough edges of the excavated area. The mammoth plywood form situated carefully over my shoulder was both heavy and awkward as I fought to keep my balance step after step down the treacherous decline. Finally, I lowered the structured form into place beside the other forms along the concrete footing. Rods were inserted and clamps were applied as the wall took shape. We were laying the foundation for a house that was being built in suburban Chicago, and I was working for a concrete construction company on the wall crew.

That experience of preparing foundations gave me insight into the importance of laying adequate foundations for structured buildings. When you get right down to it, a building is only as sturdy as the strength of its foundation.

The apostle Paul uses this analogy in a figurative sense when speaking of the spiritual construction of the church at Corinth. In 1 Corinthians 3:10, 11 he says, "According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building upon it. But let each man be careful how he builds upon it. For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

Now Paul was concerned that the Corinthian church should be consciously aware of their foundational roots. It seems that certain individuals were introducing humanistic thinking saturated with fleshly motives as the basis upon which to build their ministry. This was totally inconsistent, however, with the way Paul had begun the work at Corinth. What the Corinthians were doing was simply leading the church astray from its pur-



pose of glorifying Christ. Paul wanted them to refocus on the foundation that had been laid for the church and then to build a ministry that was consistent with that foundation.

The word "foundation" in 1 Corinthians 3 is the Greek word *themelios* which refers to a substructure—something put down as an undergirding for what would be built. *Themelios* actually comes from a root word that means to put or place something down, to establish something and fix it firmly. So Paul was saying that there was a spiritual substructure to the Corinthian church that had been laid, upon which everything else was to be built. And that undergirding foundation was Jesus Christ.

The point here is that a foundation should determine the type of building to be erected. If Jesus Christ is the foundation, then everything should focus on Him and His Word. To build with mere human ideas and secular thinking was to ignore the foundation. Proud leaders seeking to impose their own agenda on the ministry of the church were to be

shunned as diversionary and counterproductive. Only that which glorifies Christ and is in accordance with His Word was to be accepted and honored.

There is a lesson here for us. We in the contemporary church are still building upon the foundation that was laid by the Apostles and Prophets of the 1st century church (Ephesians 2:20). Consequently, our methodologies, programming and procedures need to be continually reevaluated as to whether they are consistent with that foundation. Does what we do truly bring glory to Christ or does it simply cater to popular interest and fleshly indulgence? Christ is the issue—not merely pleasing ourselves.

Paul said that there is only one foundation for the church and that is Jesus Christ. When the Word of Christ is faithfully taught with a central focus on glorifying Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, then the church will be strong and vibrant. How we build must be consistent with the foundation that was laid. So, how are *you* building? ■

Say What?

Is what's taking place in the church today the same gift of tongues as found in the Bible?

That's the question that Dan Hayden answers in his audio teaching series called **The Gift of Tongues.**

Six powerful messages that explode the myths and misunderstandings concerning this confusing issue. Discover where it's mentioned in Scripture, what the word "tongues" means, how it is being used today, the illegitimacy of a second gift, the purpose of tongues, the modern tongues movement, and the biblical position explained.



The Gift of Tongues is available on 6 audio tapes for \$19 or on 6 CDs for \$12, plus shipping.

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“ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not receive the light. For the true light, which, coming into the world, enlightens every man. He was in the world, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

ACTS of the WORD



An Interview with Marquis Laughlin

Sola Scriptura: Tell us a little bit about your background.

Marquis Laughlin is an actor whose life's work is enabling his audiences to hear, see, and feel the God of the Bible, through the words of the Bible. His unique and compelling dramatic Scripture presentations include Genesis, Ecclesiastes, Daniel, John's Gospel, and Revelation, and have been presented all over the world. Recent works include Mark's Gospel performed at the Forum of Trajan in Rome, Italy, and John's Gospel performed at the Hampton Court Mid-Summer Festival in Herefordshire, England.

Mr. Laughlin is a distinguished Staley Lecturer and maintains an active touring schedule of theaters, conferences, colleges, and houses of worship. His voice can be heard as the narrator for Tyndale Publishing's Illumina, the first interactive fully animated Bible, being introduced this fall on DVD. He is the voice in Good News Publishers' audio book of the English Standard Version Bible. Marquis also provides the narration for The Scriptorium: Center for Biblical Antiquities, a thematic museum that chronicles the history of the Bible, at The Holy Land Experience in Orlando, Florida.

Marquis Laughlin: I grew up in Washington state, in a little town called Gig Harbor, which is about an hour outside of Seattle. I was raised in the church by a single mom. I had started doing dramatic interpretation in high school and was successful in competing nationally. My big dream was to be able to do one-man drama for a living. I remember sitting down with my high school counselor, and she asked me what I wanted to do. I told her my dream, and we both laughed. She said, "Now pick a real career," so I picked broadcasting. I went to school to be a broadcaster initially, and as soon as I got to school I started getting back into drama. When I finished the dramatic arts program at Washington State University, I moved down to Los Angeles to find my fame in film as a movie actor. I had been in Los Angeles less than a year and had seen the end of the rainbow. I realized there was so much futility in chasing that dream. That really drove me to a relationship with the Lord. I felt that He had a plan for my life that was immensely more profitable than anything I was doing on my own. He gave me a roommate who was a solid believer, who bought me a Bible and took me to church.

the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things
g that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the light
t comprehend it. There came a man, sent from God, whose name was

Sola: How did your ministry develop from there?

Marquis: I had a big interest in prophecy and the end times, so I started writing a one-man show that I could perform about the end times. I got so convicted about accuracy that I decided to memorize the book of Revelation because I thought I could filter my script through that knowledge. After learning the first three or four verses, I realized that people could be blessed by reading and hearing the Word. I realized I couldn't improve on the biblical script and so that drove me to memorizing and presenting Scripture.

Sola: How much Scripture have you actually memorized at this point?

Marquis: Probably close to five hours worth. I have memorized Genesis from the creation to Chapter 22, which is up to the sacrifice of Isaac. I do about ninety percent of Ecclesiastes, slightly edited, which takes about 45 to 50 minutes. I can do the book of Daniel, but people kept requesting the first six chapters, so now I do Chapters 1 through 6 which takes about an hour. I also do John's Gospel, about 90 minutes worth. It takes a little over two hours to do the whole book. Finally, I do all of Revelation which takes 90 minutes.

Sola: How do you memorize that much Scripture? What sort of technique do you use?

Marquis: I use a "T and E" technique, which is "Time and Effort." That's about the easiest way to put it. It just takes time, and I break everything down to a script like an actor would, using scenes and assigning each character lines. Once I have done that, I try to memorize the storylines. I've found that once I can put the book into an outline, then I know what happens from the beginning to the end. This provides me with a structure for the information that I'm going to memorize.

Experts on memory say that a person should try to put the information they are memorizing in a place where it can be accessed. Most of us have a lot more memorized than we can even imagine, but we just don't know where it is stored when we go to look for it. That's why we look for a picture in our mind that is the path that reminds us where that information is. What I try to do with Scripture is to create a picture in my mind. When I break it down into scenes, I will picture the scenes as vividly as I can. I will walk around it, see who's there, how they look, how they are dressed, who enters, where they come from, who is standing next to whom and on what side. Then I get a real feel for the scene and start to memorize. I try to walk the scenes out before I start the memorization process. That really helps me because then I am hanging lines on movement. This is the way most actors memorize their lines as well. It isn't until all the actors are present at rehearsal and they begin moving around a scene that the lines are committed to memory. Most of us can memorize a lot more than we think. We've all crammed for a test and have been amazed at how much we are

full of grace and truth. John bore witness of
ing, "This was He of whom I said, 'He was
higher rank than I, for He existed before me
have all received, and continue to receive grace. For
through Moses; grace and truth were realized
No man has seen God at any time; the only
the book of John. For John explained the
ness of John when the Jews sent to him from
Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" And
not deny, and he confessed, "I am not the Christ."



asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" And he said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No." They said then to him, "Who are you, so that we may give an answer to those who sent

able to absorb to answer questions from a short period of time studying. The same thing is true with Scripture. I could start 100 verses of Scriptures and you could probably finish them, but tell me where they are in the Bible... right now... that's a whole different story. When I think of the Book of Revelation, sure I can see the page, but that's not a very vivid picture. Seeing John on the Island of Patmos, sitting there writing and seeing Jesus behind him... that is a vivid picture. It allows me to access that information and when I move to the next verse, I can see the picture in my head and move to that portion of Scripture.

Sola: What's next for you?

Marquis: We are finishing "Stories from John's Gospel" on DVD. It's going to be an excellent way to access the Word. We are putting 20 stories on DVD so that a person will be able to watch nearly all of John's Gospel in about 80 minutes. There will be great instructional material to go along with each of the stories, so it will be a nice Bible study tool. Another big project for me this year is to memorize the book of Exodus, and that's a challenge!

Sola: How can people pray for you?

Marquis: Please pray that God will continue to open doors for me to proclaim His message: The Mystery of Christ.

Sola: How would you describe your ministry to those who would consider inviting you to perform?

Marquis: The best way to explain my ministry is that it's about enabling people to get into the Word of God. There seems to be a real challenge on the part of most believers to access the Bible in a way that's engaging and really life-changing. People are used to seeing someone's face relating information to them personally, and they like watching and listening to stories. It's really an old medium, yet most people only experience the Bible in print, so this is another way that opens up more of their senses. I believe the spoken word offers some unique advantages over reading Scripture silently because it communicates on so many levels. That's what my ministry is all about, trying to facilitate access to Scripture. People need to hear God. They need to experience Him. ■

To find out more about the ministry of Marquis Laughlin or to schedule an event in your church or area, contact Karen Stevens at 800-844-9930 or email: kstevens@solagroup.org.

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Practicing to Walk

■ Thank you for your excellent “Opening Thoughts” in the Spring 2003 issue of *Sola Scriptura*... “A Way of Life.” Since my first reading of a little book entitled *Practicing the Presence of God* way back in December, 1978, my wife and I have been “practicing” to walk with God through Jesus in our lives, teaching it to our three children (who are now grown and married). Hopefully we have encouraged others along the way. Jesus, when He was on the earth, was in constant contact with His Father... all day, every day... and as you said “24/7/365.” The ultimate example for us!

—RICK HOOVER
via the Internet



Truly knowing the Word

■ Thank you for sending both the magazine and other information regarding your ministry. I must say that I was very delighted in reading the materials and found them refreshing and educational. The article on Luther (“Sola Scriptura” Autumn 2002) was great as were the believer’s comments on the interfaith gathering (“Why Another Magazine?” Autumn 2002). Your editorials hit home, and I will be subscribing as soon as possible. Up until three months ago I was an unpracticing Roman Catholic, thirsty for the truth. Now, by finding your website and linking into others, I am now beginning to truly know the Word of God and have been reading the Scriptures daily. I am thankful to know that through accepting the Bible, I have found the truth. I am now trying to find a ministry close to my home where I can participate in further study of the Word of God and find some fellowship to assist me. As for now, I am wandering the internet in that quest, but I am confident that God will lead me there.

—LOUIS MACCHIA
South Plainfield, New Jersey

What we need now

■ Your magazine’s structure is superb. It is neither over- nor underwhelming in its size

and layout. Its content is outstanding in that it is what we need now—back to the basics, the real basics from an organization that researches well. Its impact is world-class. My husband and I tell everyone about it. The style of writing reminds me of a few other memorable works that I have read, just the essentials presented in terms that an average lay person can readily grasp and enjoy!

—JOAN POLGREEN
via the Internet

Just wondering

■ If you are Lutherans, I do not and will not listen to you any longer. Lutherans make Luther a god.

—KATHY THORNBURGH
via the Internet

Sola Scriptura is not affiliated with the Lutheran church or any other denomination. We work to rightly divide the Word of God so that all who seek to know Him might use us as a resource and help in their quest to live godly lives!

Disturbed?

■ Your article on “bibliolatry” (“Bible Study Is Not Enough” Winter 2003) was disturbing.

You assert that “There is no benefit in the Scriptures alone” and then assert that “those who study the Bible without a living relationship with Christ are in the ditch.” This is nonsense. It is misleading to readers to separate Christ from His Word. The Scriptures assert that “We have the mind of Christ.” It is a tactic of liberals, neo-orthodox, and other unbelievers to separate Christ from His Word.

—MICHAEL THAYER
via the Internet

The main point of the article was that the Pharisees knew the words of Scripture but not the Word. Similarly, today many people are convinced that the Bible is the Word of God, yet the evidence of this conviction is absent from how they live.

Address correspondence to Sola Scriptura magazine:

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Include full name and address. Letters may be edited to yield brevity and clarity.

TRUTH FOR TODAY

Got Bible?

Stu Kinniburgh



Imagine that you are getting ready to participate in one of those reality TV shows set in the jungle that allows a person to take only one ‘comfort item’ with them for the duration of the taping...



...Some bring cosmetics, others bring food, and one brings a ball of string. What would you bring? For most Christians, the answer is simple — their Bible. Was that your answer, or did you consider something more ‘practical’? Are you a Christian who doesn’t read the Bible regularly? You hear people talk about reading and studying the Bible all the time. Most agree that it’s important, that God speaks through the words in Scripture, and that reading the Bible allows one to understand God’s message to mankind — yet there it sits on the cabinet, or bedside table, or dresser, or wherever it is in your home. It’s not that you don’t appreciate the Bible. You may have fallen victim to the old saying, “Familiarity breeds contempt.” You know all the stories but you gain little from reading them again and again. In other words, you might choose to bring your own pillow as a comfort item before your Bible.

You’ve read portions of Scripture before — and even memorized some verses when you were in Sunday school many years ago. Somehow, those references are still fresh in your mind, but the verses you tried to remember four weeks ago are faded beyond all recall. You admire the Bible — like it, in fact... and enjoy talking about it with your friends, or perhaps at church or at that couples’ Bible study

you attend. You have a general grasp of what happened, who did what to whom and what the end of the story will be for mankind. You believe that the world was created as described in Genesis that the sea really parted for Moses, that David really killed Goliath and became king, and that Solomon’s wisdom was not enough to keep him out of trouble. You believe that Jesus was born in a manger in Bethlehem, grew up and was able to heal people and perform miracles, and that He accepted the penalty for your sin when He was crucified on a cross. You have no doubt that He rose after three days and that His disciples spread the Good News across the land. Why, then, is such a big deal made about continuing to read the Bible over and over again? How often and under what circumstances do you read the owner’s manual to your car or the instructions for your VCR? When was the last time that someone asked you if you’ve re-read *Moby Dick* or *Robinson Crusoe*?

Of course, there are verses that speak of keeping the Word in our hearts like Joshua 1:8 “This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night...” and Ps 119:9-11 “How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Thy word. With all my heart I have

sought Thee; do not let me wander from Thy commandments. Thy word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against Thee.” From these and many other verses, it seems clear that we are encouraged to read and study the Scriptures, yet many still avoid reading their Bible in favor of a host of other activities.

In fact, it probably isn’t a matter of consciously avoiding reading the Word as much as it is an inadvertent carelessness to the significance of Scripture. We are busy. We tend to use up all the time in our day with work, play and rest. Adding a focus on the Bible requires that we ‘find the time’ to fit it into one of those categories. Some try the work aspect, quickly reading a devotional at work during a lull in the day’s activities. Some seek to make it a part of play by having entertaining Bible studies complete with snacks or by enforcing a “quiet time” before heading out to the ball field. Many fit it into the rest category, and often wake up in the middle of the night to close the pages of their Bible and turn off their reading light. Some may find the time but are confused with another issue — what exactly is reading the Bible? Is it picking a passage and reading until we finish our allotted time? Is it methodically going through the Bible from start to finish over and

over again? Is it a study of some sort... writing down our thoughts about passages we've read? Do we use a concordance to select some passage of Scripture significant to the "worry of the day"? In light of this confusion, many will choose not to pick up and read their Bible until they can do it 'correctly.'

Okay, you know you should do it. You feel guilty when you don't do it. You want to enjoy the blessing of the obedience of doing it. How can you get over the hump? Perhaps this. Honor. That's it. Honor. Just like in "Honor thy father and mother..." which means to do things that please and revere your parents simply because they are your parents. We are to honor God for what He has done and for who He is. We read His words to us because He

communicates with us through them. The Bible is not just any book. It was written by God Himself, and is infinitely deeper and more important than Moby Dick and contains instructions far more significant than those in our car owner's manual. You may know the stories of the Bible, but the Bible is much more than a collection of short stories. Those stories were included to help you learn about God, and to communicate with you in a way that you can understand. We are inundated every day by junk that we hear on the radio and television. Every advertisement has an ulterior motive — you may think that the advertisers want you to be thinner, more beautiful, more comfortable, richer, happier... but in fact, they want you to purchase their product. They want

your money. God does not necessarily want your money. He does not want anything that you have to give, and yet He wants all that you have to give. He wants you to honor Him by giving to Him that place of respect and authority in your life. Above work. Above play. Above rest. Praying to Him is important, and allows us to pour out our hearts to Him. But reading His Word is the way that He pours out His heart to us. However we do it... from start to finish, topically, with or without a study... we honor Him by creating the time, not finding the time, to read His revelation to us. Each time we do, He will reveal just a bit more to us about His character, about life, and about how we fit into the puzzle. Honor Him. Read His Word. ■



Rock layers in hours—can it be?

Question: Most people have been indoctrinated by evolutionists to believe that it takes millions of years to form rock layers, such as the ones we see at the Grand Canyon. So can these layers actually form quickly?

Answer: Yes. The story that you hear at the Grand Canyon is that it took millions of years of processes to lay down the material to form rock layers. But in some research that's been conducted at Mt. St. Helens in Washington state, it's been shown that layers of rocks can be laid down very quickly.

At Mt. St. Helens, there's one rock layer that's about 30 feet thick. It was formed after a volcanic eruption in the early 1980s—but it took just one afternoon! Normally this kind of rock layer would be interpreted—especially by evolutionists—as taking a long time to form.

Now what's the point? Well, creation scientists have been ridiculed by evolutionists for saying that the catastrophic events of Noah's Flood formed most of the fossil layers over the Earth—and very quickly. What happened at Mt. St. Helens was on a small scale, but it did show geologists that such layers can form quickly.

If the earth was created just a few thousand years ago, does that mean each day of Creation was 24 hours in length?

Ken Ham looks at this intriguing topic in his booklet on the six days of Creation. You can read it on his website at AnswersRadio.com.

The Great Bible

Dr. Herbert Samworth

“Lord, open the King of England’s eyes,” were the last recorded words of William Tyndale before his death on October 6, 1536. They were a prayer that King Henry VIII would permit the free circulation of the Bible in English.

Unknown to Tyndale, Miles Coverdale had already printed a complete copy of the Bible in English the previous year. Because the English Bible was still illegal, it had to be smuggled into England.

Within three years of his death, Tyndale’s prayer was gloriously answered. In 1537, Henry permitted a limited circulation of what was known as the Matthew’s Bible. The following year, he ordered that every church in England was to have a copy of the English Bible “in the largest size.” This Bible became known as The Great Bible.

Richard Grafton was chosen to be the printer of the The Great Bible and Miles Coverdale was to be the editor. It was a revision of both the Coverdale and Matthew’s Bibles. However, rather than printing in London, Grafton began the work in Paris, France because the presses in England were not sufficient to carry out the work. Why did Francis I, the Catholic King of France, permit a Protestant Bible to be printed in his country? We can only surmise that Francis was not unwilling to have something printed that he thought might help destabilize the government of his chief rival, King Henry VIII.

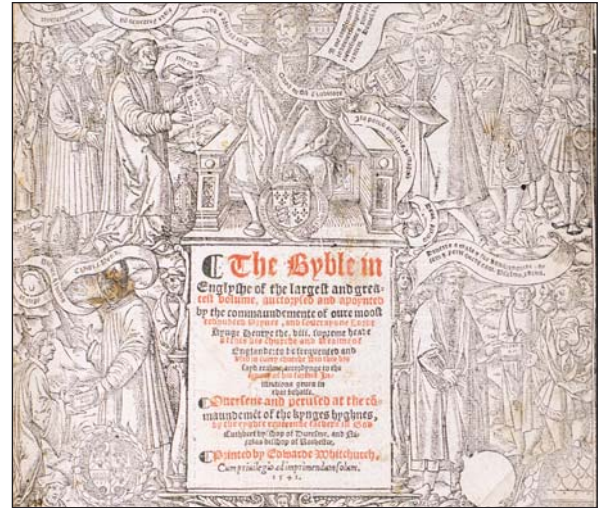
However, when the Inquisitor-General of France heard about the work, he ordered the printing to stop immediately. He attempted to expropriate the presses and the copies that had already been printed. Grafton and Coverdale moved quickly to preserve what they could. They managed to move the presses, paper, and the workmen to England. In addition,

they were able to salvage a large percentage of what had been done.

In England the work went smoothly and the printing and binding of the first edition was completed in 1539. The work then began to distribute it to the churches. Frequently, it was chained to a lectern in the church where people could come to hear the Bible read. For this reason, The Great Bible was also called the “Chained Bible.” Many people went to church to hear the Bible read rather than attending the worship services of the church. This became so popular that Archbishop Thomas Cranmer ordered that no Bible readings were to take place during the stated services!

Additional printings of the Great Bible were needed to meet Henry’s requirements. A second edition was soon published containing an introduction written by Thomas Cranmer. For this reason, The Great Bible was also called “Cranmer’s Bible” although his contribution was limited to writing the introduction.

When we come to the fifth edition, printed in 1541, and the copy owned by the Van Kampen Collection, we find a unique title page. This page portrayed King Henry distributing the Bible to Thomas Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury and Thomas Cromwell, the Lord Chancellor. They, in turn, were pictured as giving the Bible to the people. Identification of these individuals was possible by noting the reproduction of their coats of arms under their figures. However, in the fifth edition, the coat of arms belonging to Thomas Cromwell has been left blank, although it had appeared in the previous edition. The reason for this was that Cromwell had been executed for treason the previous year. Cromwell had arranged an ill-conceived mar-



riage between Henry and Anne of Cleves. Henry was so angry with Cromwell that he had him executed. The title page to the fifth edition was printed with his coat of arms omitted.

However, there is another fascinating feature to the title page. Although sanctioned by both the throne and the church, church officials had to read the text of The Great Bible carefully to assure its orthodoxy. Two persons were selected for this responsibility. The first was Nicholas Heath, an ardent Roman Catholic who later became the Archbishop of York and Lord Chancellor under Queen Mary. The other individual was none other than Cuthbert Tunstall, the Bishop of Durham. This was the same person, who, when serving as Bishop of London, rejected Tyndale’s request to translate the Scriptures and later burned his Bibles at St. Paul’s Cross and Antwerp!

The lesson we can learn from this title page is that, when God determined the English people to have the Bible in their own language, He even used those who opposed it. It is one of the great ironies of history that Cuthbert Tunstall, who rejected Tyndale and his work, would one day authorize what was, in essence, Tyndale’s translation to be placed in every church in England! ■

The Great Bible is part of The Van Kampen Collection, one of the world’s largest private collections of Bibles, artifacts, and biblical manuscripts in the world. The Collection is the centerpiece of Sola Scriptura’s ministry, and is housed at The Scriptorium, an interactive museum at The Holy Land Experience in Orlando, Florida.

FINAL THOUGHTS

“For if you just listen and don’t obey, it is like looking at your face in a MIRROR but doing nothing to improve your appearance.

You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. But if

you keep looking steadily into God’s PERFECT LAW - the law that sets you FREE - and if you do what it says and don’t forget

what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it.”

— James 1:23-25 (NLT)



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FACING THE STORMS OF LIFE?

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