



The Presbyterian Church in Canada

2 Timothy 3:14-17

Scripture Alone – A reflection by the Rev. Sybil Mosley

The relevance of scriptures has not changed or lost its power. There is no circumstance in life that it cannot or will not speak to. Scripture is alive and active today, as it was from creation and throughout all generations.

Like Timothy, we too are both challenged and encouraged to hold to it and live by it. It never fails - thank God! It is the sure and sole authority of God. He is the same yesterday and, today and forever”

It's one thing to read and/or listen to the Scripture and another to be inspired by it. Both are relevant.

To be inspired by the scriptures leads to transformation and reformation; Martin Luther had experienced both, so must we.

When scripture takes hold of us, actions must follow that glorify God.

Friends, there is no experience like when the word of God grips us. We just can't get away. We know without a doubt it's God and like Jacob, we will declare “I will not let you go unless you bless me.” It carries us all the way until we rest in it and watch God at work.

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Colossians 1:11-20

Christ Alone – A reflection by the Rev. Germaine Lovelace

How will we exist together even though we share so many differences?

We will through the power of the only reconciler, Jesus Christ!

We live in a world that is becoming increasingly polarized as people are treated because of how they look, how they speak, their life choices, and how they express their religious beliefs. Yet, Colossians declares, “God provides strength through Christ alone and in him we have the ability to endure any difficulty we may face in our lives.”

Christ lives so that *all people* may have life. Christ alone can bring all people into a relationship where we become beneficiaries of Christ’s strength, character, love, faithfulness and power.

In these verses, the word **for “all”** appears eight times, hammering home the completeness of the work of Christ in a world where there is so much indifference.

Miroslav Volf in his Book, *“From Exclusion to Embrace”* suggests that *“At the heart of the cross is Christ’s stance of not letting the other remain an enemy and of creating space in himself for the offender to come in.”* The arms of the crucified are open a sign of a space in God’s self and an invitation for the enemy to come in.

We can live with confidence that all the things that are so wrong will be made right and that Christ has already begun making all things right. Christ invites us into his kingdom, makes us partners of all things made right, so we work toward justice, and reconciliation. We do these things because we know that all of this will be done in Christ, who alone makes it possible. Amen.

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Philippians 3:4b-12

Faith Alone – A reflection by the Rev. Peter Bush

The Reformers declared loudly that salvation could not be earned by good works, it could not be earned. Instead salvation was God's gift to be accepted by faith, which itself was a gift from God.

This seemingly dry theology carries profound pastoral meaning.

At the Reformation@500 event in Halifax in 2014, The Rev. Dr. Cynthia Chenard asked, "What does the minister have to offer a family whose 17-year-old daughter has been killed in a traffic accident?" All the pastor has is faith in God, nothing else. Faith alone. Faith in a God who hears the cries of our hearts and knows the questions we don't dare ask. When the pretty veneer of our lives is stripped away, all we have is faith that God will hold us.

A faith expressed by Julian of Norwich, who in the middle of the Black Death epidemic in Europe, voiced this truth when she said, "All will be well, all will be well, and all manner of thing will be well." In the end all there is God's gift of faith.

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I Corinthians 10: 23-33

To God Alone be Glory – A reflection by the Rev. Karla Wubbenhorst

“Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory,” (Psalm 115). Our churches and our Christian living get it wrong when the main focus becomes the interests or the subjectivities of human beings. The Reformation saw clearly that the Christian life had to be theocentric (centred on God) rather than anthropocentric (centered on human beings).

Our fundamental gospel is that GOD saves! Salvation is not of ourselves – God gave its objective basis in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. God the Father drew us; God the Spirit created faith in us. It is ALL of God. And so the GLORY goes ALL TO God.

A zeal for God’s glory, practically speaking, keeps all of God’s people in better harmony, as they lay aside the individual interests and agendas that divide them, and work for whatever will bring God the highest honour. In this spirituality the primary question is not, “how shall I ensure that my self-image gets the dignity it is entitled to, who will fight for my interests, how can I fill the hunger for all I need and want?” but recognizing that God has already given us ALL this: “how shall I live so that God can use me” – for the enhancement of His own reputation?” Have you ever thought, if the universe were centred around us, what a tedium worship would be? The object of our praise would be far too small. Only God is glorious enough to captivate and satisfy us for all eternity.

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Ephesians 2:1-10

Grace Alone – A reflection by the Rev. Frances Saville

I am a Pastor, I hold a Masters of Divinity degree, I'm a Chaplain in Canadian Armed Forces, holding the rank of Captain, I'm a minister of Word and Sacrament for 25 years, a Christian, baptized as an infant, zealous for Christ and for his church.

Credentials for boasting, we all have them.
Many of you have far greater pedigrees, degrees, awards, accolades, and credentials than mine.

On that day of judgment, when I will stand before God, on that day of judgment when you stand before God, what do our credentials mean? **Nothing**

What will we say on that day of reckoning?

For I am also a sinner, broken in my relationship with God and others, unable to love the Lord with all my heart, mind, soul and strength, unable and sometimes even unwilling to love my neighbour as myself.

And so if I am saved it is by grace alone, sola gratia.
Jesus lived the perfect life that we cannot live and offered that life to the Father on our behalf, setting us free from having to earn God's love and favour.

We take the risk of living before God on no other basis than Jesus' righteousness, trusting that he has accomplished entirely for us what we could not begin to do on our own.

This is God's gift, because God loves us, and is for us.

Joined to Christ, we are God's Masterpiece, saved by grace alone.

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