

The Meaninglessness Of Ambiguity

A Conversation About What A Church Bases Its Beliefs Upon

Church visitor: Sir, could you please tell me what your church bases its beliefs on?

Pastor: We base our beliefs on the Bible in its entirety and on the Bible alone.

Church visitor: But that tells me almost nothing.

Pastor: Why do you say that?

Church visitor: Because such a statement is so ambiguous as to be meaningless.

Pastor: Oh Really? I'll have you know that not all churches base their beliefs on the Bible alone.

Church visitor: True. However, many churches with widely varying doctrines and practices make the same "Bible-only" claim. In addition, many cults also proclaim they base their beliefs on the Bible alone.

Pastor: So, what should our church be basing its beliefs on if not the Bible alone?

Church visitor: Have you ever heard of creeds or confessions?

Pastor: Yes, of course. There's the Apostle's Creed and the Westminster Confession of Faith.

Church visitor: Correct. And there are many other creeds and confessions such as the 1689 London Baptist Confession, the Three Forms of Unity of the Reformed Church, the Belgic Confession, the 39 Articles of the Church of England, Keach's Catechism, the Shorter Catechism of the Presbyterian Church, the Larger Catechism Of the Presbyterian Church, the Five Articles of the Remonstrants, the Heidelberg Catechism, the Nicene Creed and the Waldensian Confessions of Faith, to name a few (OK, I named more than a few).

Pastor: So what? Weren't all those documents created simply because men were not satisfied with sticking with God's Word alone?

Church visitor: No. On the contrary. Those documents were developed as safeguards against error and as a way of insuring that the correct Biblical interpretation of many Bible doctrines was taught and adhered to by members of various churches.

Pastor: Well I believe the Bible is sufficient in and of itself for me.

Church visitor: But that line of thinking is the very reason why so many churches are way off base nowadays, regarding even the most important and fundamental of all Christian doctrines.

Pastor: Can you give me an example?

Church visitor: Why certainly. Consider the example of the depravity of unsaved man. The Bible teaches - and many confessions reaffirm the fact - that unregenerated men are totally incapable of reaching out to Christ, the REAL Christ for salvation. Meaning that to tell people to "accept Christ" in order to become saved is like telling a rock to roll over and expecting it to do so.

Pastor: That's just your opinion. In my church we teach that sinners need to accept Christ in order to be saved and that's in the Bible.

Church visitor: You may think it's in the Bible but it really is not. And that is not just my opinion but also the opinion of the many highly respected Bible teachers, preachers and scholars of the past. And it is the opinion of many studious Bible teachers, who familiarized themselves with the Creeds and Confessions and the scholarly writings of many great theologians of days gone by, and found that those documents are in fact, in line with Scripture and are in fact, representative of the CORRECT interpretation of Scripture on so many doctrines that are misunderstood in modern Christendom.

Pastor: It sounds like I better start doing my homework and checking out those creeds and confessions.

Church visitor: Yes, that would be a very good idea. The things you uncover in such an investigation may surprise you, more that you may realize.

Pastor: I guess the Bible school I went to left a lot of important things out of their curriculum.

Church visitor: I would not be surprised if that was the case.
