

SHARING SCRIPTURE

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By Scripture Alone—*Sola Scriptura*

For use: April 26 - May 2

Texts: 1 Corinthians 4:1-6; Titus 1:9; 2 Timothy 1:13; Mark 12:10, 26; Luke 24:27, 44, 45; Isaiah 8:20

False positives. That's not a reassuring phrase when it comes to a life or death antibody test for COVID-19.

In a recent *New York Times* online article by Apoorva Mandavilli (April 24, 2020) titled, "Coronavirus Antibody Tests: Can You Trust the Results?", the subheading states: "A team of scientists worked around the clock to evaluate 14 antibody tests. A few worked as advertised. Most did not."

Dr. Greg Poland, director of the Mayo Clinic's Vaccine Research Group, is concerned with the regulatory control of the new test kits. "How are manufacturers testing these? Are they rushing these out prematurely? That economic motive is what requires regulatory oversight." [2] Poland further explains, "Nobody's done what I would call a thorough head-to-head comparison with a validated gold standard. ... I'm actually surprised that some of these kits can be used clinically."

Poland said he's concerned about the tests giving false positives, leading some to believe they have antibodies. "And they're going to act and react according to that misinformation. That's a problem."

A similar concern is addressed in this week's Sabbath school lesson titled, "By Scripture Alone—*Sola Scriptura*." How does one determine the accuracy of their theological beliefs? And if multiple churches claim their religious doctrine is pure and accurate, yet the results are in conflict with one another, how do you know what to believe?

While the established church mixed Scripture with human tradition, great

teachers like Martin Luther stated, “Scripture alone is the true lord and master of all writings and doctrine on earth” (from Sunday’s lesson, p. 39). The Protestant reformers helped Christian believers reestablish that the gold-standard test for true living and faith is the Bible and the Bible alone.

While there are many study tools that can help us in our understanding of Scripture, none of them are to supersede the authority of the Bible. Both Old and New Testaments are the inspired Word of God and can be counted on to lead us to solid results that will carry us through these momentous times.

~Curtis Rittenour

[1] https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/24/health/coronavirus-antibody-tests.html?campaign_id=9&emc=edit_nn_20200426&instance_id=17959&nl=morning-briefing@i_id=122993745&segment_id=26000&te=1&user_id=9c0538a872d8dc556bacf4baec929474

[2] <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/health/2020/04/24/coronavirus-there-covid-19-antibody-testing-near-me-probably-not/3013202001/>

For Reflection

Connecting: Have you ever “tested” something in your life, only to discover that the test you used was not very reliable?

Sharing: Read 2 Timothy 3:16, 17. What does this passage teach us about the reliability of the Bible?

1. “All Scripture” emphasizes that we don’t pick and choose parts of the Bible that suit our own beliefs.
2. The Bible was written “by inspiration of God,” making it a unique and divine book unlike other literature.
3. Paul says Scripture is “profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”
4. The Bible thoroughly equips us “for every good work.” The purpose of Scripture is to help us live a Christ-like life.
5. Verse 15 also reminds us the Holy Scriptures make us “wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”
6. Other...

Applying: If you are able, connect with your group online. List five books (a Bible, a book of poetry, a songbook, a history book, and an encyclopedia) and set them before your small group. Then ask group members to organize them by what is most trustworthy to what is least trustworthy. Discuss that makes a book more reliable.

Valuing: Do you completely trust the Bible as a trusted source of guidance in your life? Text or phone a friend and pray together, asking God to help you prioritize Scripture as the true test of all your beliefs.

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Paul Richardson
Executive Director

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