

## The Westminster Confession of Faith

### Chapter I

## Of the Holy Scripture

I Although the light of nature, and the works of creation and providence do so far manifest the goodness, wisdom, and power of God, as to leave men unexcusable; yet are they not sufficient to give that knowledge of God, and of His will, which is necessary unto salvation. Therefore it pleased the Lord, at sundry times, and in divers manners, to reveal Himself, and to declare that His will unto His Church; and afterwards for the better preserving and propagating of the truth, and for the more sure establishment and comfort of the Church against the corruption of the flesh, and the malice of Satan and of the world, to commit the same wholly unto writing; which makes the Holy Scripture to be most necessary; those former ways of God's revealing His will unto His people being now ceased

*Psa 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Psa 19:2 Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. Psa 19:3 There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. Psa 19:4 Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them he has set a tent for the sun,*

*Rom 1:19 For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. Rom 1:20 For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.*

*Rom 1:32 Though they know God's decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them. Rom 2:1 Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things. Rom 2:14 For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. Rom 2:15 They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them .*

*1Co 1:21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. 1Co 2:13 And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.*

*1Co 2:14 The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.*

*Heb 1:1 Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets,*

*Pro 22:19 That thy trust may be in the LORD, I have made known to thee this day, even to thee. Pro 22:20 Have not I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge, Pro 22:21 That I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee?*

*Luk 1:1 Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, Luk 1:2 just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us, Luk 1:3 it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, Luk 1:4 that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught.*

*Rom 15:4 For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.*

*Mat 4:4 But he answered, "It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."*

*2Ti 3:14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it 2Ti 3:15 and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.*

*2Pe 1:19 And we have something more sure, the prophetic word, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts,*

*Heb 1:1 Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, Heb 1:2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.*

II. Under the name of Holy Scripture, or the Word of God written, are now contained all the books of the Old and New Testament, which are these: Of the Old Testament: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, I Samuel, II Samuel, I Kings, II Kings, I Chronicles, II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, The Song of Songs, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi. Of the New Testament: The Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, The Acts of the Apostles, Paul's Epistles to the Romans, Corinthians I, Corinthians II, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians I, Thessalonians II, To Timothy I, To Timothy II, To Titus, To Philemon, The Epistle to the Hebrews, The Epistle of James, The first and second Epistles of Peter, The first, second, and third Epistles of John, The Epistle of Jude, The Revelation of John. All which are given by inspiration of God to be the rule of faith and life.

*2Ti 3:16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness*

*Act 1:16 "Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand by the mouth of David concerning Judas..."*

*Act 4:24 And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, "Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, Act 4:25 who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit, "Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain?"*

*Joh 14:26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.*

*1Ti 5:18 For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer deserves his wages."*

*2Pe 3:15 And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, 2Pe 3:16 as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.*

III. The books commonly called Apocrypha, not being of divine inspiration, are no part of the canon of the Scripture, and therefore are of no authority in the Church of God, nor to be any otherwise approved, or made use of, than other human writings.

IV. The authority of the Holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed, and obeyed, depends not upon the testimony of any man, or Church; but wholly upon God (who is truth itself) the author thereof: and therefore it is to be received, because it is the Word of God.

*2Pe 1:20 knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. 2Pe 1:21 For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

V. We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the Church to an high and reverent esteem of the Holy Scripture. And the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole (which is, to give all glory to God), the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, the many other incomparable excellencies, and the entire perfection thereof, are arguments whereby it does abundantly evidence itself to be the Word of God: yet notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts.

*Joh 16:13 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. Joh 16:14 He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.*

*1Co 2:10 these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. 1Co 2:11 For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. 1Co 2:12 Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God.*

VI. The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for His own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men. Nevertheless, we acknowledge the inward illumination of the Spirit of God to be necessary for the saving understanding of such things as are revealed in the Word: and that there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God, and government of the Church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature, and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the Word, which are always to be observed.

*Gal 1:8 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. Gal 1:9 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.*

*1Co 14:26 What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.*

VII. All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all: yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed for salvation are so clearly propounded, and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of the ordinary means, may attain unto a sufficient understanding of them.

*2Pe 3:15 And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, 2Pe 3:16 as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.*

*Psa 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.*

VIII. The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek (which, at the time of the writing of it, was most generally known to the nations), being immediately inspired by God, and, by His singular care and providence, kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentic; so as, in all controversies of religion, the Church is finally to appeal unto them. But, because these original tongues are not known to all the people of God, who have right unto, and interest in the Scriptures, and are

commanded, in the fear of God, to read and search them, therefore they are to be translated in to the vulgar language of every nation unto which they come, that, the Word of God dwelling plentifully in all, they may worship Him in an acceptable manner; and, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, may have hope.

*Mat 5:18 For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.*

*Isa 8:20 To the teaching and to the testimony! If they will not speak according to this word, it is because they have no dawn.*

*Act 15:15 And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written,*

IX. The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself: and therefore, when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture (which is not manifold, but one), it must be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly.

*Eph 2:19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, Eph 2:20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone,*

*Act 15:15 And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written, Act 15:16 "After this I will return, and I will rebuild the tent of David that has fallen; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will restore it,*

X. The supreme judge by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture.

*Mat 22:29 But Jesus answered them, "You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God. Mat 22:31 And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God.*

*Eph 2:19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, Eph 2:20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone*