

Survey of the Westminster Confession of Faith

Leadership College – Module 2
Part 2: The Doctrine of the Confession
Introduction
Chapter 01: Of the Holy Scriptures



Welcome to Module 2

- **Reformed Doctrine, Theology and Ecclesiology**
“holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.”
(Titus. 1:9)
- **Focus:** To survey and examine the distinct emphases of the historic Reformed faith, the symbols and creeds, and understand the form of government held by conviction to be from the Word of God. The progression of thought will go from learning to understanding to embracing to defending to teaching the doctrines of grace.



Discipling Men for Leadership

Course Requirements for Registered Students

- Attendance – you may miss up to 3 lectures.
 - www.Ephesians515.com – courses
 - Leadership College – Module 2 – Recorded Classes & PowerPoints for audio recordings, 2008
 - “6) Doctrine: History and Survey of the Westminster Confession of Faith” – Party 2: Doctrine – for video recordings (2020-21)
 - Current class schedule is adapted and only slightly altered.

Course Requirements for Registered Students

- Catch up on the History and Background
 - www.Ephesians515.com – courses
 - Leadership College – Module 2 – “Recorded Classes & PowerPoints” - for audio recordings, 2008
 - “6) Doctrine: History and Survey of the Westminster Confession of Faith” – Classes 1-3
 - You can notify me when you have done either of these.

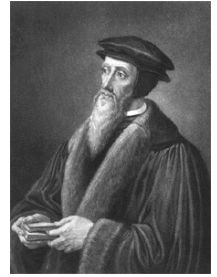
Course Requirements for Registered Students

- Required Reading – 4 books (rf. Handout)
- Required Writing
 - Reaction to “The Legacy of John Calvin”, by Steve Lawson
 - Overture exercise
- “Required” Attendance/Observance – Presbytery Mtg.s
 - Saturday, 1/21 – Faith Christian Fellowship, 505 E. 42nd St., B’more
 - Tuesday, 3/14 – Forest Hill PCA, 23 Newport Dr., Forest Hill
 - Tuesday, 5/9 – Gateway Community of Faith, location TBD

Other Resources

- Jerusalemchamber.com
- Ligonier.org
 - Search “Westminster Confession of Faith”
 - Search “John Gerstner” – video teaching series
- www.Ephesians515.com
 - Courses – History and Survey of the Westminster Confession of Faith (2020-21) – History, Consequence, and Perspective
 - Courses – The History of Presbyterianism in the United States – sections VI and VIII.

We start with the Bible



“Nearly all the wisdom we possess, that is to say, true and sound wisdom, consists of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves.”

“Again, it is certain that man never achieves a clear knowledge of himself unless he has first looked upon God’s face, and then descends from contemplating him to scrutinize himself.”

John Calvin

Ch. 1 – Of the Holy Scripture

1. 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 maketh the Holy Scripture to be most necessary; those former ways of God’s revealing his will unto his people being now ceased.

Ch. 1 – Of the Holy Scripture

2. 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:

(Herein lies the list of the OT and the NT)

All which are given by inspiration of God to be the rule of faith and life.

The Human/Divine Character of the Scriptures



The Old Testament

written over a period of 1,500+ years,
utilizing many different, human authors
in the form of history, prophecy, poetry,
and wisdom literature;

The New Testament

written over a period of 50-60 years
utilizing 8-10 different, human authors
in the form of gospel, history, instruction, prophecy

Ch. 1 – Of the Holy Scripture

3. 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.

Ch. 1 – Of the Holy Scripture

4. The authority of the Holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed, and obeyed, dependeth 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.

Ch. 1 – Of the Holy Scripture

5. 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 doth 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.

Ch. 1 – Of the Holy Scripture

6. 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.

Ch. 1 – Of the Holy Scripture

7. 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.

Ch. 1 – Of the Holy Scripture

8. 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 into 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.

Ch. 1 – Of the Holy Scripture

9. 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.

Ch. 1 – Of the Holy Scripture

10. 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.

