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Of Holy Scripture

She was 18 and tired of being TOLD what to do. She was sick of church and Sunday school. She didn't like to go to youth choir and, furthermore, none of her friends went. The rules and regulations of her puritanical parents were childish. Other girls, much younger than she, had more money to spend, could stay out later, go more places, date anyone they pleased, and no one at home seemed to care. She had just HAD it!

In a stormy, defiant mood, Betty stood before her mother, "I want my freedom. I want to run my own life and I've taken all I can of your standards. I don't see why I have to obey you. I'm almost an adult. You don't like my music, the shows I go to, the things I do, the boys I date, and home is nothing but a drag."

Before her mother could speak Betty went on, "The church, the Bible, obey, that's all I hear. My friends laugh at me. They want me to try new things, experiment with them, and live the real life. EXPERIENCE is what counts today, and believe me, they know 'cause they've tried it all. That's what I call really living!"

Are you able to relate to this or are you so far removed from it or so deceived that you fail to realize that this occurrence is familiar to many Christian parents?

When the "heat of her battle" cooled could you have been ready with a sure response for Betty? Think back on all that she said. Upon WHAT was she basing her authority? Was it the Bible? Explain.

Why would the Westminster divines when writing the Confession have selected the subject of the HOLY SCRIPTURES to be first, before MAN, GOD, SIN, and others?

Turn to Section 2 of Chapter 1 of the Confession. Why is "Holy Scripture" of such importance to humanity?

Do you have friends who say that they do not need to read the Bible or attend church services since they commune with God while they are playing golf, or out on a lake fishing, or relaxing at the beach? In what words does the Confession point out that that argument is inadequate for either salvation or growth as a Christian?

Frances R. Beattie writes "the opening utterance of the Confession very clearly teaches that the light of nature is adequate grounds for God to punish man if he fails to obey Him." How does Romans 1:20-21 substantiate this?

With equal clarity the Confession states that nature is not sufficient to lead men to salvation, and that God has, in His sovereign grace in differing ways and times, given supernatural revelations of Himself. In time God also inspired certain men to commit this revelation to writing. This writing is our _____.

From a modern translation or paraphrase of the Bible explain the meaning of the phrase from Hebrews 1:1, "Long ago, at many times and in many ways..."

What would be included in "those former ways of God's revealing His will..."? (Chapter 1, Section 1)

The "Canon" of Scripture is a term referring to the list of books in the entire Bible. How many books are included? (If you do not know them why not learn them?)

1. In the Old Testament -
2. In the New Testament -

"God created the canon," Dr. Morton Smith of Greenville Seminary writes, "by giving the inspired writing to the people, and the church then had to recognize it as such."

Section 2 refers to the Holy Scripture (Bible) as the "Word of God _____" also that it is given by "_____", to be the _____, of _____ and _____. "What really does this mean in everyday living? (Refer to 2 Timothy 3:16.)

Quite literally "inspired of God" means "God-breathed." Peter uses the same idea in 2 Peter 1:21, "...but men spoke from God" as they were carried along (or 'borne along') by the Holy Spirit." Their personalities, their life experiences and their abilities were not disregarded, "Men wrote under the control and guidance of the Spirit of God, the result being in every word of the original documents a perfect and errorless recording of the exact revelation which God desired to give to men." (Gausson)

What is meant by the "Apocrypha"? According to Section 3, why do we not include these books in the Bible?

From your knowledge of Scripture and from Section 4 why should Christians claim as their AUTHORITY the Word of God? (1 Thessalonians 2:13)

How long has this authority been in existence? (Genesis 1:1; John 1:1; Nehemiah 9:6; Job 26:7; Acts 17:24)

From Section 5 what are ways which demonstrate the Bible to be the Word of God?

Define: (use a dictionary perhaps)

1. Infallible -

2. Truth -
3. Divine -
4. Authority -
5. Plenary -
6. Verbal -

Using the above words, summarize below the biblical doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture.

INERRANT is another word often used to describe the Scripture. What does it mean? How does it relate to the Bible?

In spite of all the confirming evidences of truth, what in the final analysis does God use to apply the message of the Word of God to the individual heart? (Section 5)

Read Sections 6 and 7 together.

1. What things are clearly presented in Scripture?
2. What areas not so clearly presented?

Does Matthew 5:18 relate to this section? Explain,

Since Scripture does not allow for new revelation how does God use Scripture in our own lives? How can the Bible be a practical tool of every day? (John 6:45; 1 Corinthians 2:9, 10, 12; Psalm 119:11, 129, 130; 2 Corinthians 4:6)

It should be clear from your study of the Confession of Faith that it points away from itself to the written Word of God as the only authoritative and unmistakable rule of faith and life. There is so much very practical, obvious truth in the Bible for each of us that we should never struggle over the minor details hidden from our understanding when the major ones are still a problem. Have you ever considered how much time is wasted on arguing and debating little things when the greatness of Scripture and its teaching need to be studied and practiced?

What is Section 8 saying very clearly?

Explain the following and illustrate.

1. A version -
2. A translation -
3. A paraphrase -

Which is the inerrant, infallible Word of God? Explain,

The best commentary on Scripture is "_____ itself," states Section 9. It is God's final, complete revelation to man.

From 1 Peter 1:23 just how long will the Word of God exist?

Section 10 is extremely helpful as we conclude this chapter. The One Supreme Judge in our lives, the One Who discerns the thoughts and intents of our hearts and Who leads us to all truth is to be _____
_____.

As you conclude this first chapter of the Confession do you understand the importance of knowing that the Bible is God's written revelation to man? It is totally free of error, it contains the one true message of LIFE and without it we could not hope to know God as Savior. Do you know your Bible in this way so that the One of Whom it speaks is a personal, real, living God to you? In preparation for the next chapter on God read the gospels, at least JOHN, and ask the Holy Spirit to speak to your heart as it is open before Him.