



THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

1:1 The Holy Scriptures are the only sufficient, certain, and infallible standard of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience.¹ The light of nature and the works of creation and providence so clearly demonstrate the goodness, wisdom, and power of God that men are left without excuse; however, these demonstrations are not sufficient to give the knowledge of God and His will that is necessary for salvation.² Therefore, the Lord was pleased at different times and in various ways to reveal Himself and to declare His will to His church.³ To preserve and propagate the truth better and to establish and comfort the church with greater certainty against the corruption of the flesh and the malice of Satan and the world, the Lord put this revelation completely in writing. Therefore, the Holy Scriptures are absolutely necessary, because God's former ways of revealing His will to His people have now ceased.⁴

¹ Isaiah 8:20; Luke 16:29, 31; Ephesians 2:20; 2 Timothy 3:15–17

² Psalm 19:1–3; Romans 1:19–21; 2:14–15

³ Hebrews 1:1

⁴ Proverbs 22:19–21; Romans 15:4; 2 Peter 1:19–20



1:2 The Holy Scriptures, or the Word of God written, consist of all the books of the Old and New Testaments. These are:

THE OLD TESTAMENT: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

THE NEW TESTAMENT: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, Jude, Revelation.

All of these are given by the inspiration of God to be the standard of faith and life.⁵

⁵ 2 Timothy 3:16

1:3 The books commonly called the Apocrypha were not given by divine inspiration and so are not part of the canon or standard of the Scriptures. Therefore, they have no authority for the church of God and are not to be recognized or used in any way different from other human writings.⁶

⁶ Luke 24:27, 44; Romans 3:2



1:4 The authority of the Holy Scriptures obligates belief in them. This authority does not depend on the testimony of any person or church but on God the author alone, who is truth itself. Therefore, the Scriptures are to be received because they are the Word of God.⁷

⁷ 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:19–21; 1 John 5:9

1:5 The testimony of the church of God may stir and persuade us to adopt a high and reverent respect for the Holy Scriptures. Moreover, the heavenliness of the contents, the power of the system of truth, the majesty of the style, the harmony of all the parts, the central focus on giving all glory to God, the full revelation of the only way of salvation, and many other incomparable qualities and complete perfections, all provide abundant evidence that the Scriptures are the Word of God. Even so, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority of the Scriptures comes from the internal work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts.⁸

⁸ John 16:13–14; 1 Corinthians 2:10–12; 1 John 2:20, 27

1:6 The whole counsel of God concerning everything essential for His own glory and man's salvation, faith, and life is either explicitly stated or by necessary inference contained in the Holy Scriptures. Nothing is ever to be added to the Scriptures, either by new revelation of the Spirit or by traditions of men.⁹



Nevertheless, we acknowledge that the inward illumination of the Spirit of God is necessary for a saving understanding of what is revealed in the Word.¹⁰ We recognize that some circumstances concerning the worship of God and government of the church are common to human actions and organizations and are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian wisdom, following the general rules of the Word, which must always be observed.¹¹

⁹ Galatians 1:8–9; 2 Timothy 3:15–17

¹⁰ John 6:45; 1 Corinthians 2:9–12

¹¹ 1 Corinthians 11:13–14; 14:26, 40

1:7 Some things in Scripture are clearer than others, and some people understand the teachings more clearly than others.¹² However, the things that must be known, believed, and obeyed for salvation are so clearly set forth and explained in one part of Scripture or another that both the educated and uneducated may achieve a sufficient understanding of them by properly using ordinary measures.¹³

¹² 2 Peter 3:16

¹³ Psalms 19:7; 119:130

1:8 The Old Testament was written in Hebrew, the native language of the ancient people of God.¹⁴ The New Testament was written in Greek, which at the time it was written was most widely known to the nations. These Testaments were inspired directly by God and by His unique



The Holy Scriptures

care and providence were kept pure down through the ages. They are therefore true and authoritative,^a so that in all religious controversies the church must make their ultimate appeal to them.¹⁵ All God's people have a right to and a claim on the Scriptures and are commanded in the fear of God to read¹⁶ and search them.¹⁷ Not all of God's people know these original languages, so the Scriptures are to be translated into the common language of every nation to which they come.¹⁸ In this way the Word of God may dwell richly in all, so that they may worship Him in an acceptable manner and through patience and the comfort of the Scriptures may have hope.¹⁹

^a *authentic*

¹⁴ Romans 3:2

¹⁵ Isaiah 8:20

¹⁶ Acts 15:15

¹⁷ John 5:39

¹⁸ 1 Corinthians 14:6, 9, 11–12, 24, 28

¹⁹ Colossians 3:16

1:9 The infallible rule for interpreting Scripture is the Scripture itself. Therefore, when there is a question about the true and full meaning^b of any part of Scripture (and each passage has only one meaning, not many), it must be understood in light of other passages that speak more clearly.²⁰

^b *sense*

²⁰ Acts 15:15–16; 2 Peter 1:20–21



1:10 The supreme judge for deciding all religious controversies and for evaluating all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, teachings of men, and individual interpretations,^c and in whose judgment we are to rest, is nothing but the Holy Scripture delivered by the Spirit. In this Scripture our faith finds its final word.²¹

^c *private spirits*

²¹ Matthew 22:29, 31–32; Acts 28:23; Ephesians 2:20





GOD AND THE HOLY TRINITY

2:1 The Lord our God is one, the only living and true God.¹ He is self-existent² and infinite in being and perfection. His essence cannot be understood by anyone but Him.³ He is a perfectly pure spirit.⁴ He is invisible and has no body, parts, or emotions.^a He alone has immortality, dwelling in light that no one can approach.⁵ He is unchangeable,⁶ immense,^{b,7} eternal,⁸ incomprehensible, almighty,⁹ in every way infinite, absolutely holy,¹⁰ perfectly wise, wholly free, completely absolute. He works all things according to the counsel of His own unchangeable and completely righteous will¹¹ for His own glory.¹² He is most loving, gracious, merciful, and patient. He overflows with goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin. He rewards those who seek Him diligently.¹³ At the same time, He is perfectly just and terrifying in His judgments.¹⁴ He hates all sin¹⁵ and will certainly not clear the guilty.¹⁶

^a *passions*

^b transcends all space

¹ Deuteronomy 6:4; 1 Corinthians 8:4, 6

² Isaiah 48:12; Jeremiah 10:10

³ Exodus 3:14

⁴ John 4:24

⁵ Deuteronomy 4:15–16; 1 Timothy 1:17



The 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith

⁶ Malachi 3:6

⁷ 1 Kings 8:27; Jeremiah 23:23

⁸ Psalm 90:2

⁹ Genesis 17:1

¹⁰ Isaiah 6:3

¹¹ Psalm 115:3; Isaiah 46:10

¹² Proverbs 16:4; Romans 11:36

¹³ Exodus 34:6–7; Hebrews 11:6

¹⁴ Nehemiah 9:32–33

¹⁵ Psalm 5:5–6

¹⁶ Exodus 34:7; Nahum 1:2–3

2:2 God has all life,¹⁷ glory,¹⁸ goodness,¹⁹ and blessedness in and of Himself; He alone is all-sufficient in Himself. He does not need any creature He has made nor does He derive any glory from them.²⁰ Instead, He demonstrates His own glory in them, by them, to them, and upon them. He alone is the source of all being, and everything is from Him, through Him, and to Him.²¹ He has absolute sovereign rule over all creatures, to act through them, for them, or upon them as He pleases.²² In His sight everything is open and visible.²³ His knowledge is infinite and infallible. It does not depend upon any creature, so for Him nothing is contingent or uncertain.²⁴ He is absolutely holy in all His plans, in all His works,²⁵ and in all His commands. Angels and men owe to Him all the worship,²⁶ service, or obedience that creatures owe to the Creator and whatever else He is pleased to require of them.

¹⁷ John 5:26

¹⁸ Psalm 148:13

¹⁹ Psalm 119:68



God and the Holy Trinity

²⁰ Job 22:2–3

²¹ Romans 11:34–36

²² Daniel 4:25, 34–35

²³ Hebrews 4:13

²⁴ Ezekiel 11:5; Acts 15:18

²⁵ Psalm 145:17

²⁶ Revelation 5:12–14

2:3 This divine and infinite Being consists of three real persons,^c the Father, the Word or Son, and the Holy Spirit.²⁷ These three have the same substance, power, and eternity, each having the whole divine essence without this essence being divided.²⁸ The Father is not derived from anyone, neither begotten nor proceeding. The Son is eternally begotten of the Father.²⁹ The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.³⁰ All three are infinite and without beginning and are therefore only one God, who is not to be divided in nature and being. Yet these three are distinguished by several distinctive characteristics and personal relations. This truth of the Trinity is the foundation of all of our fellowship with God and of our comforting dependence on Him.

^c *subsistences*, or individual instances of a given essence

²⁷ Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 John 5:7

²⁸ Exodus 3:14; John 14:11; 1 Corinthians 8:6

²⁹ John 1:14, 18

³⁰ John 15:26; Galatians 4:6

