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# INTRODUCTION

## *The Work of the Westminster Assembly*

John Murray

The Westminster Assembly first convened on July 1, 1643. For the first three months the Assembly was largely occupied with the revision of the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England. Perhaps the two most important events during the course of these three months were the adoption of the Solemn League and Covenant and the arrival in the Assembly of three of the Scottish commissioners.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland met in August. It was on August 19th that the General Assembly, in answer to the request of both Houses of Parliament in England, nominated and elected Alexander Henderson, Robert Douglas, Samuel Rutherford, Robert Baillie, and George Gillespie, ministers, and John Earl of Casils, John Lord Maitland, and Sir Archibald Johnston of Warriston, ruling elders, with commission and power to them, or any three of them, whereof two should be ministers, to repair to the Assembly of Divines, sitting at Westminster. On or about September 14th three of these arrived in Westminster. On September 15th they were admitted to the Assembly. They were Alexander Henderson, George Gillespie, and John Lord Maitland.

The Solemn League and Covenant was drafted by Alexander Henderson in Scotland and was approved by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland on August 17, 1643. It was then taken to England and after some slight changes it was adopted by the House of Commons and the Westminster Assembly on September 25th. It was then sent back to Scotland and on October 13th it was adopted, signed, and sworn to by the Commission of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and the Committee of the Convention of Estates of the Scottish Parliament and sent throughout the country to be subscribed to by the people.

On October 12, 1643, while the Westminster Assembly was working on the

sixteenth article of the Thirty-Nine Articles there came an order from both Houses of Parliament that the divines should forthwith "confer and treat among themselves of such a discipline and government as may be most agreeable to God's holy word, and most apt to procure and preserve the peace of the Church at home, and nearer agreement with the Church of Scotland and other Reformed Churches abroad." They were also instructed at the same time to prepare a Directory of Worship or Liturgy for use in the church.

It was in pursuance of this order that the Assembly entered upon prolonged debates on the question of church government, debates that engaged so much of the time of the Assembly during the remainder of 1643 and throughout 1644. These labours on the part of the divines gave us what is known as "The Directory for the Publick Worship of God" and "The Form of Presbyterial Church-Government," both agreed upon by the Assembly. They were also approved by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in February 1645.

These two documents form two of the four parts of uniformity in which it was so ardently desired that the whole island should be united. In the Directory for Public Worship we have one of the finest fruits of the work of the Assembly, a document not so well known as the Confession and Catechisms yet one that lies on a plane of excellence not a whit lower than that of the Confession and Catechisms. Nothing in human literature will afford us better instruction in the dignity and decorum that ought to characterize the public worship of God.

On August 20, 1644, a committee was appointed by the Assembly to prepare matter for a Confession of Faith. The subsequent history of the preparation of the Confession is rather complicated. This history, however, witnesses to the marvelous care and patience with which the divines accomplished the task committed to them.

It was not until September 24, 1646, that the first nineteen chapters of the Confession of Faith were completed and sent to the House of Commons. On October 1st a duplicate was sent to the House of Lords. On October 9th the House of Commons ordered that five hundred copies of these nineteen chapters be printed.

It was on December 4, 1646, that the remaining fourteen chapters of the Confession were completed and it was resolved that the whole Assembly present the whole Confession to both Houses of Parliament. This was done, and on December 10th an order was brought from the House of Commons for the printing of six hundred copies of the Confession. This was the first edition of the whole Confession.

This edition, the first of the whole Confession, did not, however, contain the proof texts. It is of interest to know that the Assembly was quite reluctant to add proof texts. The reason for this was not in the least fear of being unable to support the propositions of the Confession by Scripture but rather that a complete presentation of Scripture proof would have required a volume. However, at the insistence of the House of Commons the Assembly undertook to add proof texts in the margin. Not until January 7, 1647, do we find the Assembly entering upon the debate of proof texts. For the next four months a large part of the Assembly's time was occupied with the consideration of these proof texts. On April 29th this work was completed and on that date the Confession of Faith with Scripture proofs cited on the margin was presented to both Houses of Parliament. The House of Commons instructed that six hundred copies of the Confession with proofs be printed. This was the first edition of the Confession with Scripture proofs added. The Confession of Faith was approved by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland on August 27, 1647.

In the records of the Westminster Assembly we find a great deal of debate regarding "Catechism" prior to the date upon which the Assembly entered upon the composition of the two Catechisms with which we are familiar, namely, the Larger and Shorter. This lengthy consideration of "Catechism" fitted the Assembly in very admirable fashion for the framing of the Catechisms that were finally adopted and which we know as the Larger and Shorter Catechisms of the Westminster Assembly.

It was on April 15, 1647, that the Assembly entered upon the debate of the Larger Catechism. Much work had, however, been done for months prior to this by a committee that had been appointed to prepare a draft of both Catechisms. From April 15th the attention of the Assembly was largely devoted to the debate on the Larger Catechism. It is important to note that George Gillespie, one of the ablest of the Scottish Commissioners, left for Scotland on July 16th. When he left, the Assembly had advanced as far as the question that is Question 94 in the completed Catechism. On August 9th, when the Assembly was working on the third commandment in the Larger Catechism, the Assembly called for the report on the Shorter Catechism and not until October 25th do we have the first mention of debate upon it. George Gillespie had therefore taken his final departure from the Assembly before the latter entered upon the debate of the Shorter Catechism.

On October 15th the Larger Catechism was completed and it was ordered to be transcribed. On this date an interesting minute occurs in the records of the Assembly. Upon motion by Samuel Rutherford, another of the Scottish Commissioners, it was ordered to be recorded in the Scribes' books that "The Assembly hath enjoyed the assistance of the Honorable Reverend and learned

Commissioners from the Church of Scotland in the work of the Assembly; during all the time of the debating and perfecting of the 4 things mentioned in the Covenant, viz. the Directory for Worship, the Confession of Faith, Form of Church Government, and Catechism, some of the Reverend and learned Divines Commissioners from the Church of Scotland have been present in and assisting to this Assembly". This shows the jealousy with which the Scottish Commissioners regarded the sanctity of the Covenant and the fidelity with which they discharged their commission. Rutherford took his leave of the Assembly on November 9th.

On October 22nd the Larger Catechism was ordered to be sent to both Houses of Parliament. Not later than November 25th the Shorter Catechism was completed, for on that day it was delivered to the House of Commons. Both Catechisms were approved by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in July 1648.

To sum up therefore, the period over which the Westminster Assembly completed its work on the five important documents for which it is held in perpetual remembrance extended from October 12, 1643, to November 25, 1647. This is a period of more than four years. The five documents to which allusion is here made are the Confession of Faith, the Larger Catechism, the Shorter Catechism, the Directory for Public Worship, and the Form of Presbyterial Church-Government, and they constitute the four heads of uniformity mentioned in the Solemn League and Covenant, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms being both included under the one head of Catechism. The last of the sessions of the Assembly that is numbered is that of February 22, 1649. This is session 1163.

The work produced by the Westminster Assembly has lived and will permanently live. The reason is obvious. The work was wrought with superb care, patience, precision, and above all with earnest and intelligent devotion to the Word of God and zeal for His glory. Sanctified theological learning has never been brought to bear with greater effect upon the formulation of the Christian Faith. While it would be dishonoring to the Holy Spirit to accord to these documents a place in any way equal to the Word of God either in principle or in practical effect, yet it would also be dishonoring to the Holy Spirit, who has promised to be with His church to the end, to undervalue or neglect what is the product of His illumination and direction in the hearts and minds of His faithful servants. Other men laboured and we have entered into their labours.

THE  
WESTMINSTER  
CONFESSION OF  
FAITH

AGREED UPON BY THE ASSEMBLY OF DIVINES AT WESTMINSTER, WITH THE ASSISTANCE  
OF COMMISSIONERS FROM THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, AS A PART OF THE COVENANTED  
UNIFORMITY IN RELIGION BETWIXT THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN THE KINGDOMS OF  
SCOTLAND, ENGLAND, AND IRELAND.

APPROVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY 1647, AND RATIFIED AND ESTABLISHED BY ACTS  
OF PARLIAMENT 1649 AND 1690, AS THE PUBLICK AND AVOWED CONFESSION OF THE  
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND,

WITH

THE PROOFS FROM THE SCRIPTURE.

## Act Approving The Confession Of Faith

Assembly at Edinburgh, August 27, 1647. Sess. 23.

A Confession of Faith for the Kirks of God in the three kingdoms, being the chiefest part of that uniformity in religion, which by the Solemn League and Covenant, we are bound to endeavour: And there being accordingly a Confession of Faith agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines sitting at Westminster, with the assistance of Commissioners from the Kirk of Scotland; which Confession was sent from our Commissioners at London to the Commissioners of the Kirk met at Edinburgh in January last, and hath been in this Assembly twice publicly read over, examined, and considered; copies thereof being also printed, that it might be particularly perused by all the members of this Assembly, unto whom frequent intimation was publicly made, to put in their doubts and objections, if they had any: And the said Confession being, upon due examination thereof, found by the Assembly to be most agreeable to the Word of God, and in nothing contrary to the received doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of this Kirk. And, lastly, It being so necessary, and so much longed for, that the said Confession be, with all possible diligence and expedition, approved and established in both kingdoms, as a principal part of the intended uniformity in religion, and as a special means for the more effectual suppressing of the many dangerous errors and heresies of these times; the General Assembly doth therefore, after mature deliberation, agree unto, and approve the said Confession, as to the truth of the matter (judging it to be most orthodox, and grounded upon the Word of God); and also, as to the point of uniformity, agreeing for our part, that it be a common Confession of Faith for the three kingdoms. The Assembly doth also bless the Lord, and thankfully acknowledge his great mercy, in that so excellent a Confession of Faith is prepared, and thus far agreed upon in both kingdoms; which we look upon as a great strengthening of the true Reformed religion against the common enemies thereof. But, lest our intention and meaning be in some particulars misunderstood, it is hereby expressly declared and provided, That the not mentioning in this Confession the several sorts of ecclesiastical officers and assemblies, shall be no prejudice to the truth of Christ in these particulars, to be expressed fully in the Directory of Government. It is further declared, That the Assembly understandeth some parts of the second article of the thirty-one chapter only of kirks not settled, or constituted in point of government: And that although, in such kirks, a synod of Ministers, and other fit persons, may be called by the Magistrate's authority and nomination, without any other call, to consult and advise with about matters of religion; and although, likewise, the Ministers of Christ, without delegation from their churches, may of themselves, and by virtue of their office, meet together synodically in such kirks not yet constituted, yet neither of these ought to be done in kirks constituted and settled; it being always free to the Magistrate to advise the synods of Ministers and Ruling Elders, meeting upon delegation from their churches, either ordinarily, or, being indicted by his authority, occasionally, and pro re nata; it being also free to assemble together synodically, as well pro re data as at the ordinary times, upon delegation from the churches, by the intrinsic power received from Christ, as often as it is necessary for the good of the Church so to assemble, in case the Magistrate, to the detriment of the Church, withhold or deny his consent; the necessity of occasional assemblies being first remonstrated unto him by humble supplication.

A. Ker.

CHARLES I. Parl. 2. Sess. 2. Act 16.

Act anent the Catechisms, Confession of Faith, and Ratification thereof.

AT EDINBURGH, February 7, 1649.

The Estates of Parliament, now presently convened in this second Session of the second triennial Parliament, by virtue of an Act of the Committee of Estates, who had power and authority from the last Parliament for convening the Parliament, having seriously considered the Catechisms, viz. the Larger and Shorter ones, with the Confession of Faith, with three Acts of Approbation thereof by the Commissioners of the General Assembly, presented unto them by the Commissioners of the said General Assembly; do ratify and approve the said Catechisms, Confession of Faith, and Acts of Approbation of the same, produced as it is; and ordains them to be recorded, published, and practiced.

# 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;<sup>1</sup> yet are they not sufficient to give that knowledge of God, and of His will, which is necessary unto salvation.<sup>2</sup> Therefore it pleased the Lord, at sundry times, and in divers manners, to reveal Himself, and to declare that His will unto His Church;<sup>3</sup> 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;<sup>4</sup> which makes the Holy Scripture to be most necessary;<sup>5</sup> those former ways of God's revealing His will unto His people being now ceased.<sup>6</sup>

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:

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<sup>1</sup> ROM 2:14 For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: 15 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another; 1:19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. 20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse. PSA 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. 2 Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. 3 There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. ROM 1:32 Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them. 2:1 Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.

<sup>2</sup> 1CO 1:21 For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. 2:13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

<sup>3</sup> HEB 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets.

<sup>4</sup> PRO 22:19 That thy trust may be in the Lord, I have made known to thee this day, even to thee. 20 Have not I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge, 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 1:3 It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, 4 That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed. ROM 15:4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. MAT 4:4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. 7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. 10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. ISA 8:19 And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? 20 To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

<sup>5</sup> 2TI 3:15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 2PE 1:19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.

<sup>6</sup> HEB 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.

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.<sup>7</sup>

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.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> LUK 16:29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. 31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead. EPH 2:20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. REV 22:18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: 19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. 2TI 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.

<sup>8</sup> LUK 24:27 And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. 44 And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in

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.<sup>9</sup>

V. We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the Church to an high and reverent esteem of the Holy Scripture.<sup>10</sup> 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.<sup>11</sup>

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.<sup>12</sup> 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:<sup>13</sup> and that there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God, and government of the Church, common to human actions

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the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. ROM 3:2 Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God. 2PE 1:21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

<sup>9</sup> 2PE 1:19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts. 21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. 2TI 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. 1JO 5:9 If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. 1 TH 2:13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

<sup>10</sup> 1TI 3:15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

<sup>11</sup> 1JO 2:20 But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. 27 But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. JOH 16:13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. 14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. 1CO 2:10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. ISA 59:21 As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.

<sup>12</sup> 2TI 3:15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. GAL 1:8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. 9 As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. 2TH 2:2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

<sup>13</sup> JOH 6:45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. 1CO 2:9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. 10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

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.<sup>14</sup>

VII. All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all:<sup>15</sup> 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.<sup>16</sup>

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 authentical;<sup>17</sup> so as, in all controversies of religion, the Church is finally to appeal unto them.<sup>18</sup> 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,<sup>19</sup> therefore they are to be translated in to the vulgar language of every nation unto which they come,<sup>20</sup> that, the Word of God dwelling plentifully in all, they may worship Him in an acceptable manner;<sup>21</sup> and, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, may have hope.<sup>22</sup>

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.<sup>23</sup>

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.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> 1CO 11:13 Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered? 14 Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? 14:26 How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying. 40 Let all things be done decently and in order.

<sup>15</sup> 2PE 3:16 As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things: in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.

<sup>16</sup> PSA 119:105 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. 130 The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.

<sup>17</sup> MAT 5:18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

<sup>18</sup> ISA 8:20 To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. ACT 15:15 And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written. JOH 5:39 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. 46 For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.

<sup>19</sup> JOH 5:39 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

<sup>20</sup> 1CO 14:6 Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine? 9 So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air. 11 Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me. 12 Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church. 24 But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: 27 If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most three, and that by course; and let one interpret. 28 But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.

<sup>21</sup> COL 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

<sup>22</sup> ROM 15:4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning; that we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope.

<sup>23</sup> 2PE 1:20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. 21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. ACT 15:15 And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, 16 After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up.

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<sup>24</sup> MAT 22:29 Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. 31 But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying. EPH 2:20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. ACT 28:25 And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers.

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## Chapter II

### Of God, and of the Holy Trinity

I. There is but one only,<sup>25</sup> living, and true God,<sup>26</sup> who is infinite in being and perfection,<sup>27</sup> a most pure spirit,<sup>28</sup> invisible,<sup>29</sup> without body, parts,<sup>30</sup> or passions;<sup>31</sup> immutable,<sup>32</sup> immense,<sup>33</sup> eternal,<sup>34</sup> incomprehensible,<sup>35</sup> almighty,<sup>36</sup> most wise,<sup>37</sup> most holy,<sup>38</sup> most free,<sup>39</sup> most absolute;<sup>40</sup> working all things

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<sup>25</sup> DEU 6:4 Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord. 1CO 8:4 As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God by one. 6 But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.

<sup>26</sup> 1TH 1:9 For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God. JER 10:10 But the Lord is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting King.

<sup>27</sup> JOB 11:7 Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? 8 It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? 9 The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea. 26:14 Lo, these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?

<sup>28</sup> JOH 4:24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

<sup>29</sup> 1TI 1:17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

<sup>30</sup> DEU 4:15 Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire: 16 Lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female. JOH 4:24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. LUK 24:39 Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

<sup>31</sup> ACT 14:11 And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. 15 And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein.

<sup>32</sup> JAM 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. MAL 3:6 For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

<sup>33</sup> IKI 8:27 But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded? JER 23:23 Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? 24 Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord.

<sup>34</sup> PSA 90:2 Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. 1TI 1:17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

<sup>35</sup> PSA 145:3 Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable.

<sup>36</sup> GEN 17:1 And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. REV 4:8 And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.

<sup>37</sup> ROM 16:27 To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

<sup>38</sup> ISA 6:3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

REV 4:8 And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.

<sup>39</sup> PSA 115:3 But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.

<sup>40</sup> EXO 3:14 And God said unto Moses, I Am That I Am: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I Am hath sent me unto you.