



Blueprints for Belief

Laying the Theological Foundations for Constructing Your Faith

Westminster Confession of Faith 1.2-1.5 – February 5, 2025

1.2 *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:*

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.

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

1.3 *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.*

1.4 *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.*

1.5 *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.*

Defense from Scripture

The Inspiration of Scripture

- Isaiah 55:11
- 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- 2 Peter 1:21
- 1 Thessalonians 2:13

The Old Testament Canon

- Luke 24:44
- Romans 3:2
- Matthew 23:35

The New Testament Canon

- 2 Timothy 3:14-17
- 2 Peter 3:15-16
- John 14:26

Exclusion of the Apocrypha

- 1 Maccabees 9:27 (Apocrypha)
- The New Testament never directly quotes the Apocrypha

The Self-Authenticating Nature of the Scriptures

- John 10:27
- 1 Corinthians 2:12-14
- 2 Corinthians 4:6

Historical Support

Early Recognition of the Canon

- The early church recognized the authority of Scripture.
- Athanasius (367 AD)
- Augustine (354–430)

The Reformation and the Canon

- Scripture's authority is intrinsic, not ecclesiastical.
- Martin Luther
- John Calvin
- Westminster Assembly (1640s)

Nearly all Christians agree on the 27 New Testament books.

- All disputes about the New Testament books were resolved by the 4th century.
- All 27 books were written by Apostles or their close companions.

Criticism Regarding the Establishment of the Canon

“Scripture does not contain a list of its own books, so we must rely on church tradition to determine the canon.”

Next Week's Discussion Questions:

- How does the claim that Scripture is “breathed out by God” (2 Timothy 3:16) change the way we approach reading and studying it?
- What does it mean for Scripture to be the “rule of faith and life” (1.2)? How should that impact how we make decisions in daily life?
- If the early church didn't “create” Scripture but simply recognized its authority, what does that teach us about trusting God's guidance in history?
- 1 Corinthians 2:12-14 teaches that spiritual truth is understood by the Spirit. How should this shape our expectations when sharing the Bible with unbelievers?
- What are some ways we subtly place human authority over Scripture in our thinking or decision-making?
- What practical steps can we take to grow in our confidence that Scripture is truly sufficient for all areas of life?