

THE BIBLE
The Privileges of the Christian Life
Westminster Presbyterian Church
October 18, 2020

“For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.” (Rom 15:4)

I. Introduction

- A. What is the Bible?
- B. **Heb 1:1–2** – *“Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.”*
 - 1. **Ex 4:15** – *“... I will be with your mouth ...”*
 - 2. **Jer 1:9** – *“Then the Lord put out his hand and touched my mouth. And the Lord said to me, ‘Behold, I have put my words in your mouth.’”*
- C. The Bible is ... the divinely inspired record of the history of special revelation, all centered upon God’s accomplishment of redemption for his people, with the work of the incarnate Christ at its core.

II. The “Attributes” of Scripture

- A. Sufficiency
- B. Necessity

“God indeed was not bound to the Scriptures, but he has bound us to them”
 – Francis Turretin, *Institutes*, 2.2.2

- C. Authority

“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.”
 – Westminster Confession of Faith 1.4

“Indeed, Scripture exhibits fully as clear evidence of its own truth as white and black things do of their color, or sweet and bitter things do of their taste.” – John Calvin

- D. Perspicuity/Clarity

- 1. **Deut 30:12, 14** – *“For this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. ...¹⁴ But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it.”*
- 2. **Ps 119:130** – *“The unfolding of your words gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple” (Ps 119:130)*

III. The Sufficiency of Scripture

*“We can say all the right things about the Bible, and even read it regularly, but when life gets difficult, or just a bit boring, we look for new words, new revelation, and new experiences to bring us closer to God.” – K. DeYoung, *Taking God at His Word*, 45–46*

A. Scripture’s sufficiency has a narrow focus, but a broad application.

1. Narrow focus: Scripture is “the rule of faith and life” (WCF 1.3)!
2. Broad application: all things are to be done to the glory of God under the light of Scripture!
 - a. **1 Cor 10:31** – *“So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”*
 - b. **2 Tim 3:16–17** – *“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable... ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”*

B. Second, Scripture teaches more than what it explicitly states.

1. We must hold to S’s explicit teachings, but also what it teaches “by good and necessary consequence” (WCF 1.6) – E.g., Jesus to the Sadducees who challenge him on the resurrection (Matt 22:23–33).

C. Third, the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit is still necessary.

1. **1 Cor 2:12** – *“Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God.”* [the grand transition occurs in the new birth!]

“It now remains to pour into the heart itself what the mind has absorbed. For the Word of God is not received by faith if it flits about in the top of the brain, but when it takes root in the depth of the heart that it may be an invincible defense to withstand and drive off all the stratagems of temptation... The Spirit accordingly serves as a seal, to seal up in our hearts those very promises the certainty of which it has previously impressed upon our minds.” – John Calvin

IV. Implications of Scripture’s Sufficiency

A. Our conscience is kept safe as it is bound to the sufficient Scriptures.

B. Our love for others is refined as we submit to the sufficient Scriptures.

1. **Mark 3:20–21** – *“Then he went home, and the crowd gathered again, so that they could not even eat. ²¹ And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for they were saying, ‘He is out of his mind.’”*

C. Our confidence in Christ grows as we rest in the sufficient Scriptures.

“What more can He say that to you he has said, to you, who to Jesus for refuge have fled?” (“How Firm a Foundation”)