

GRADUAL PROGRESSION of the our Confession of Faith.

Chps. 1 - The Doctrine of the Word of God; **Chps. 2-3** - The Doctrine of God; **Chps. 4-6** - The Doctrine of Creation & The Fall; **Chps. 7** - The Framework of Salvation from the Fall (God's Covenant of Grace) ; **Chp. 8** - The Accomplishment of Salvation; **Chps. 9-21** - The Application of Salvation; **Chps. 22-30** - The Divine Institutions/Church; **Chps. 31-32** - Consummation of Salvation

INTRO: The Confession starts with the authority of the Bible because the Confession is meant to be an interpretation of the Bible. Therefore, it must start with its position on the Bible. The Confession seeks to be faithful to the Bible in what it confirms and thus it is most appropriate to start by declaring its position on the Bible. I think it's appropriate, though it may be strange that the Confession starts with the Bible rather than with God. But that is the case because the presentation of God in the Confession is drawn from the Scriptures and that's why it was necessary for the Confession to declare what it believes about the Bible before it dives into topics whose belief is based upon Scripture above all. According to the Confession, the Scripture is sufficient, certain and infallible. It is all that we need in this life for godliness and to know the will of God. We don't need extra revelations when we have His pure and sufficient Word in our hands.

PARAGRAPH 1: The Holy Scripture is the only sufficient, certain, and infallible rule of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience **1**, 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 inexcusable **2**; yet are they not sufficient to give that knowledge of God and his will which is necessary unto salvation. **3** Therefore it pleased the Lord at sundry times and in divers manners to reveal himself, and to declare that his will unto his church **4**; and afterward 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; which maketh the Holy Scriptures to be most necessary **5**, those former ways of God's revealing his will unto his people being now ceased. **6**

➤ **The Supremacy of Scripture.**

1. Isa. 8:20; Luke 16:29; Eph. 2:20; **2 Tim. 3:15-17[1]** "15And 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. 16All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:17That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

➤ **The Evidence General Revelation Provides.**

2. Rom. 1:19-21, 32; 2:12a, 14-15 **Ps.19:1-3** "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. 2Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. 3There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard."

➤ **Limits of General Revelation.**

3. Ps. 19:1-3 with vv. 7-11; 2:12a, 14-15 with 1:16-17; and 3:21 **Rom.1:19-21** "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.20For 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:21Because that, when they knew God, they

glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

➤ **Necessity of Special Revelation.**

4. **Heb. 1:1-2a** “1God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son...”

➤ **Necessity of Scripture Revelation.**

5. Prov. 22:19-21; Luke 1:1-4; 2 Peter 1:12-15; 3:1; Deut. 17:18ff; 31:9ff, 19ff; 1 Cor. 15:1; 2 Thess. 2:1-2, 15; 3:17; Rom. 1:8-15; Gal. 4:20; 6:11; 1 Tim. 3:14ff; Rev. 1:9, 19; 2:1 etc.; 2 Peter 1:19-21; **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.”

➤ **Scripture as Final Revelation.**

6. Acts 1:21-22; 1 Cor. 9:1; 15:7-8; Eph. 2:20; **Heb. 1:1-2a** 1God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son...”

PARAGRAPH 2: Under the name of Holy Scripture, or the Word of God written, are now contained all the books of the Old and New Testaments, 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 Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

OF THE NEW TESTAMENT: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, The Acts of the Apostles, Paul's Epistle to the Romans, I Corinthians, II Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, I Thessalonians, II Thessalonians, I Timothy, II Timothy, To Titus, To Philemon, The Epistle to the Hebrews, 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 of which are given by the inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life. 1**

1. **2 Tim.3:16** “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,”

➤ **The Canonicity of The New Testament.**

Let us look at what early Christians looked to see if a work is inspired or not.

First was the question of apostolicity. Was the book written by the apostles? Was it written by close associates of them, such as Mark and Luke?

Second was the question of antiquity. Did the actual work go to the time of the apostles or does it come much later from the eyewitnesses and cannot be trusted?

Using these criteria, the church looked to the writings that were claiming to be inspired and eventually came with the Canon that we now possess, the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments.

IMPORTANT We must observe that the church did not select the books, but merely acknowledged the ones that God had inspired. As John Calvin long ago said:

“Nothing, therefore can be more absurd than the fiction, that the power of judging Scripture is in the Church, and that on her nod its certainty depends. When the Church receives it, and gives it the stamp of her authority, she does not make that authentic which was otherwise doubtful or controverted but, acknowledging it as the truth of God, she, as in duty bounds shows her reverence by an unhesitating assent. As to the question, How shall we be persuaded that it came from God without recurring to a decree of the Church? it is just the same as if it were asked, How shall we learn to distinguish light from darkness, white from black, sweet from bitter? Scripture bears upon the face of it as clear evidence of its truth, as white and black do of their colour, sweet and bitter of their taste.”¹

➤ **The Inspiration of Scripture.**

What do we mean when we say that Scripture is inspired? What does it mean that 2 Timothy 3:16 says, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God”? Why do we believe that Scripture is inspired?

We believe in the inspiration and divine character of the Bible because that is what the Bible itself testifies to its character. We believe in the inspiration of Scripture, whatever that is, because God, in the Bible, testifies to it.

Inspiration is about the origin of the Scripture, not how the words become Scripture. We do not deny that the Bible is a book written by men, but what we deny is the assertion that it is only a book written by men. Rather, the words which these men penned were breathed out by God, so that they wrote the very words of God and which He wanted to have written. We cannot fully comprehend the process how God could have accomplished this, but we as Christians believe it to be true. 1 Peter 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.”

➤ **The Rule of Scripture.**

2 Tim.3:16 “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.”

PARAGRAPH 3: The books commonly called Apocrypha, not being of divine inspiration, are no part of the canon or rule of the Scripture, and, therefore, are of no authority to the church of God, nor to be any otherwise approved or made use of than other human writings. **1**

1. Luke 24:27, 44; Romans 3:2

Paragraph 2 defined **what is Scripture** by enlisting the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments. This paragraph goes on to reject those books which are accepted by the Roman Catholic Church within the scope of Scripture, namely, the Apocryphal writings. They are to be rejected because **they are not of divine inspiration**. The reason for the rejection of the Apocrypha is because God has not given it. It is not because it contains heresies or false teaching (which it does), but it is to be rejected because God did not give the Apocryphal writings. God has not given the Apocryphal writings and therefore they are no part of the canon or rule of the Scripture.

¹ John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, 1.7.2.

In other words, they are not to be used to establish doctrine or practice, because they are not from God and therefore have no authority in the church of God. There may be godly things in them and even biblical things, but they are still not God-breathed. Those who read them may benefit from them just like from any other human book, but the Apocryphal writings are to be read and tested by Scripture.

PARAGRAPH 4: The authority of the Holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed, **dependeth not upon the testimony of any man or church**, but wholly upon God (who is truth itself), the author thereof; therefore **it is to be received because it is the Word of God. 1**

1. 2 Peter 1:19-21; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; **1 John 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."

➤ The Authority of Scripture

The authority of Holy Scripture does not depend upon the testimony of the early church fathers, godly men or the church. This is against the Roman Catholic idea that the "church" establishes the canon and scope of Scripture. Furthermore, that only the "church" can properly interpret Scripture.

The authority and truthfulness of Holy Scripture depend upon God, its Author. It is interesting to note the parenthetical "who is truth itself". This is said to further confirm the truthfulness of Holy Scripture. If an author is truthful by nature, it is logical and obvious to expect that his writings will likewise reflect his nature.

This is exactly the case with God. The truthfulness of the Bible depends upon the truthfulness of God. If God is not wholly truthful then we have no reason to believe the Bible. But God is, in fact, wholly truthful. In fact, He is "the God of truth" (Isa. 65:16). It is because of the character and authorship of God ("therefore") that Scripture is to be received as truthful and authoritative.

God lays His claim upon His Word, therefore, if we were to bring another standard beside God Himself to test the truthfulness of His Word by, it would make God and His Word subordinate to that standard.

In that scenario, God and His Word are no longer the ultimate standard and rule of all faith and obedience. The ultimate standard is whatever we use to "prove" or make Scripture authoritative for people.

In the case of the Roman Catholic Church, it has itself as the ultimate standard because it stands above Scripture by defining its scope and also by claiming to be the only one who can properly interpret it. Furthermore, all practices and doctrines of the church do not need to be derived from Scripture according to the Roman church. Their Church Traditions play an equal role with God's Scriptures. In the Roman Church, therefore, the authority of the Holy Scriptures depends upon the Roman Catholic church, not only God.

PARAGRAPH 5: We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the church of God to an high and reverent esteem of the Holy Scriptures; and the **heavenliness of the matter**, the **efficacy of the doctrine**, and 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**, and many other incomparable excellencies, and entire perfections 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. **1**

1. John 16:13-14; 1 Corinthians 2:10-12; 1 John 2:20, 27 "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."

➤ **Authentication of Scripture.**

The subject of the previous paragraph continues here. This paragraph points us to the ultimate reason we believe that Scripture is God-breathed: because God testifies to us that it is God-breathed.

We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the church of God and what all kinds of saints of old and present have said about Scripture to believe it and trust it. It is good to listen to them. It is good when we see the truthfulness of Scripture from the heavenliness of the matter, *meaning* how it seems to be out of this world in what it says. Not only that but it also speaks about truths from heaven, i.e., from God (e.g., John 3:12).

We also see the truthfulness of the Bible in the efficacy of its doctrine and the majesty of its style. We see the power of Scripture in our lives and how it works to encourage us and give us hope (e.g., Rom. 15:4). We see the beauty of its vocabulary, phrases and the different styles of the different human authors. We see the unity of the subjects but also the diversity in how they are communicated by different authors and in different genres. In this, we see the consent of all the parts, in other words, the consistency of Scripture. We see how the glory of God is the main goal of the Scriptures. The Scriptures show us the glory of God, tell us that all things exist for His glory and promise us that we will share in that glory through faith in Christ (Rom. 5:2). Oh, and how beautiful is the discovery (i.e., revelation and disclosure) of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which is the only way of man's salvation and there are many more excellencies pertaining to Scripture. All these are good and should induce any reasonable man to believe that Scripture is from God.

This paragraph is given as clarification of what was said in paragraph 4. The Confession is not rejecting the testimonies of man or the church, but rather, they are saying that while these are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the Word of God, yet this is not the ultimate reason why we should receive it as such. The full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth, and divine authority comes only from the inward work of the Holy Spirit. But notice carefully how this inward testimony of the Spirit is described: **this inward testimony of the Spirit about the Word is by and with the Word**. To put it down simply, the Spirit testifies to us of the Word as we are reading and digging in the Word. We are convinced of the authority of Scripture when the Spirit bears witness to us as we are reading and studying Scripture.

It's the Holy Spirit Who can graciously convince Christians that the Bible is the sole authority in our lives. We can't judge the ultimate standard in our lives by another standard. If we do, then that means that it's not the ultimate standard anymore. **The Bible is self-attesting**—it attests to itself through the prophecies it contains, the consistency of the message and the truth of the matter about man and the world.

You may say that this is circular and you will be right. But, you must realize that every ultimate standard is circular and there is a difference between a narrow and a broad circle. A narrow-circle would be something like, "The Bible is true and from God, because 2 Timothy 3:16 says that all Scripture is inspired and from God" which is true, but that is a very narrow circle. A broad-circle would be something like, "Look at all the prophecies in the Old Testament concerning the Lord Jesus like Isaiah 53 and Psalm 2 or 22 and see how they are fulfilled in Jesus Christ against the expectation of the people in His time."

We're still in the Bible, but our circle is much broader and more forceful than merely saying that "the Bible is true because it says it is true." Ultimately, the authority of Scripture depends upon the testimony of God to His children.

PARAGRAPH 6: The whole counsel of God concerning **all things necessary** for his own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down or necessarily contained in the Holy Scripture: unto which **nothing at any time is to be added**, whether by new revelation of the Spirit, or traditions of men. **1** 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, **2** and that there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God, and government of the church, common to human actions 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. **3**

1. 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Galatians 1:8-9
2. John 6:44,45; 1 Corinthians 2:9-12
3. 1 Corinthians 11:13-14; 1 Corinthians 14:26,40

➤ **Sufficiency of Scripture.**

1. "2Tim. 3:16-17 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work."

To say that Scripture is sufficient is not to say that it speaks on every topic imaginable or that it tells us everything that we should do and everything which we should not. Rather, the sufficiency of Scripture is defined as Scripture containing everything necessary that God wanted us to know about salvation, faith, and the walk of obedience. Whatever God had deemed necessary for His people to know, He has written for our benefit in Scripture.

➤ **The Closed Canon of Scripture.**

1. Gal.1:8-9 "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. 9As 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."

The closed canon of Scripture refers to the fact that no new revelation or traditions of men should be added to the Holy Scripture. Even if God would give a new revelation, it is not to be on par with Scripture, nor added to Scripture. The canon was closed not at the time when the church arrived at the

66 books of the Bible, but with the writing of the last New Testament book, the Apocalypse. The canon was closed with the vision of the Apocalypse as God-breathed. The book of the Law warned not to add anything to God's Law:

➤ **The Necessity of the Supernatural.**

2. John 6:44-45 "44No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. 45It 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."

➤ **The General Rule of Scripture.**

3. 1 Cor.11:13-14 "13 Judge for yourselves: is it proper for a wife to pray to God with her head uncovered?14 Does not nature itself teach you that if a man wears long hair it is a disgrace for him," 1 Cor.14:26,40;

While there are things that are not specifically addressed by Scripture relating to the Worship of God, or the government of the church we are to use 'Christian prudence' and caution to ensure we are maintaining reverence and order amongst our churches.

PARAGRAPH 7: All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all; **1** 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 ordinary means, may attain to a sufficient understanding of them."**2**

1. 2 Peter 3:16

2. Psalms 19:7; Psalms 119:130

➤ **Perspicuity (Clearness) of Scripture.**

1. 2 Peter 3:16 "...as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures."
2. Psalm 19:7; Psalm 119:130 "The unfolding of your words gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple."

Not all things are alike plain in Scripture, nor is it clear unto all believers or readers of the Bible.

Peter, speaking of the writings of Paul says that "There are some things in them that are hard to understand" (2 Pet. 3:16), how much more we would have difficulty in wholly understand all things in Scripture?

But those things which God has deemed necessary to be known, believed and observed for salvation, He has clearly revealed in Scripture.

It is solely our problem that we do not perceive or understand their clarity. Not only that, even when these doctrines are spoken of in "difficult places", yet they are so clearly propounded and opened in some places of Scripture that through the use of ordinary means (learning language, studying, trying to get the meaning of the text from the text, i.e., exegesis), we may understand those things.

Some things we will understand more easily than others and that is the case with all things in life.

For the “harder” things are more study necessary. Let us observe our lives and how most of us have had a decent education and have learned enough for school because we had to or because we loved the subjects.

Not all things were easy or pleasant. But we did them for the grades or for other goals. How much more should we spend time in the reading and study of Scripture when it concerns our spiritual happiness and well-being?

How often do we neglect the Word and feed ourselves with garbage? If we would put so much effort into our education, job, hobbies or whatever else it might be, which are all momentary, how much more should we for our eternal happiness and spiritual health? Let us, therefore, be students of the Word, who are indwelt the Holy Spirit, who seek to love and obey the God of Scripture by the study and reading of His Word.

PARAGRAPH 8: The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old), **1** 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 authentic; so as in all controversies of religion, the church is finally to appeal to them. **2** But because these original tongues are not known to all the people of God, who have a right unto, and interest in the Scriptures, and are commanded in the fear of God to read, **3** and search them, **4** therefore they are to be translated into the vulgar language of every nation unto which they come, **5** that the Word of God dwelling plentifully in all, they may worship him in an acceptable manner, and through patience and comfort of the Scriptures may have hope. **6**

1. Romans 3:2

2. Isaiah 8:20

3. Acts 15:15

4. John 5:39

5. 1 Corinthians 14:6, 9, 11-12, 24, 28

6. Colossians 3:16

➤ **The Preservation and Purity of Scripture.**

Notice that the inspiration of God has to do with the original languages and manuscripts and not translations. Furthermore, what God inspired and commanded to be written, He then kept pure and preserved and are therefore authentic. Seeing that the Old Testament, mainly containing the Old Covenant, was limited to the Israelites its language was, therefore, Hebrew since that was the native language of the people of God of old. But with the New Testament and Covenant where this ethnic limitation is removed and whereby the gospel is to go to all nations, the New Testament was written in Greek, which at the time of the writing of the New Testament was most generally known to the nations.

Therefore, thanks to all these truths, in whatever controversy, the church is finally to appeal to them. Meaning, the church is to appeal to the Bible in the original languages, for that was immediately and directly inspired by God, with every iota and dot. God has kept them pure!

➤ **Access to the Scriptures.**

Then comes the necessity of translating the Bible in the languages of the people since these original tongues are not known to all the people of God. We cannot force them to learn the original languages to hear the words of God and as the people of God, they have a right to hear and read the Holy Scriptures. Not only do they have a right, but they are furthermore commanded to read and search them (John 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.").

Therefore, they are to be translated according to the languages of the nations in which the gospel comes. This is so that God may be worshiped in an acceptable manner, His people knowing His Word and what He desires in worship. Furthermore, this is also so that the Holy Scriptures may give us patience and comfort and thereby that we may have hope (Rom. 15:4).

PARAGRAPH 9: 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 by other places that speak more clearly. 1

Acts 15:15-16; 2 Peter 1:20-21 "20 knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. 21 For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."

➤ **Interpretation of Scripture.**

This is a maxim well known among the Reformers and Reformed. The best interpreter of the Scriptures is the Scripture itself. All of Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation, was given word-for-word by God. Therefore, when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture, we should search to see if this Scripture is explained elsewhere in the canon or search for the concepts. Many examples could be given of this especially with the use of the Old Testament by the New Testament authors. Their interpretation is the interpretation of the Holy Spirit. Why? Because the Holy Spirit Who gave the Old Testament also gave us the New Testament. Both have the same Author. Therefore, when we have unclear passages or concepts, we must search other places that speak more clearly upon a said passage or concept. Furthermore, Scripture has one sense, and not manifold senses and interpretations. There may be a manifold application, but the meaning is one.

This hermeneutical principle is the basis on which all proper biblical interpretation rests. Since the Bible is infallible, inerrant, truthful, therefore, it cannot truly and without resolution contradict itself.

Therefore, our interpretation of the Bible should likewise not contradict the Bible. I cannot tell you how many believers are not aware of this principle, and how essential and beneficial it is.

PARAGRAPH 10: 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 Scripture delivered by the Spirit, into which Scripture so delivered, our faith is finally resolved. 1

1. Ephesians 2:20; Acts 28:23 Matthew 22:29, 31-32 "29 But Jesus answered them, "You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God. 31 And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God: 32 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not God of the dead, but of the living."

The supreme judge, by which all controversies of religion and all things theological taught by men, are to be examined can be no other but the Holy Scripture delivered by the Spirit. The Holy scripture is the final arbiter of all truths theological. All things are to be judged in its light. It is a norm of norms and a standard of standards. A confession of faith does not stand on par with Scripture. The faithfulness and truthfulness of a confession of faith, creed, council or any doctrine are to be examined in light of the Holy Scriptures. If all these things said about the Holy Scriptures in the previous 9 paragraphs are true, then we cannot except but what is asserted in paragraph 10 about the place of Scripture. It is the final authority.

This paragraph is written also in a context wherein the Roman Catholic Church claimed to be the supreme judge in all controversies of religion. Against that, the Reformers gave the Bible, God's authoritative and infallible Word. The Pope, councils, whatever church, whatever theologian or church father, all these are to be examined by the Holy Scriptures.