

Colleyville Presbyterian Church  
Westminster Confession of Faith: Week 6 - Of Scripture (sections 9-10)  
January 29, 2023

**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. (a)

a. Acts 15:15; 2 Pet 1:20-21.

“If some other principle other than Scripture were the key to its interpretation, then Scripture would not be the ultimate authority. Its divine origin also means that Scripture, for all its diversity, is a unity. There is a common theme holding the various parts together, which in turn both justifies and requires its being interpreted as a whole.” - Robert Letham

*This is one of the reasons we have multiple readings of the Scripture in our worship each Sunday, and almost every sermon preached at our church references not only the primary sermon text, but also other parts of the Scriptures which aid in the interpretation of the primary text (this principle does **not** mean that Scripture texts do not have multiple “levels” of meaning - but it does mean that these meanings will work together and provide a unity of meaning). Another way to think of this is that any Scripture has only “one” true and full sense or meaning, but a thousand applications.*

“If we wish to search out Scripture truly, and in its fullest sense, we need to read the whole of the Bible and know it well.” - Chad Van Dixhoorn

*This is why our church emphasis the Scripture so much in its worship, its preaching, its bible studies, and its daily practices. In order to know God rightly, we must understand the whole of the Scriptures, because that is where God has revealed himself.*

**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. (a)

a. Mat 22:29, 31; Eph 2:20 with Acts 28:25.

“All religious controversies are to be determined by the Holy Spirit speaking in Scripture, in the original languages of the Old Testament (Hebrew) and New Testament (Greek). All decrees of church councils are to be examined the light of Scripture. All the writings of the church fathers are to be considered in terms of how far they correspond to the voice of the Holy Spirit speaking in Scripture. All human teachings of whatever origin...are similarly to be examined. Moreover, we are to “rest” in the judgment of Scripture; that is, it is to be our authority, too. This is a comprehensive assertion of biblical authority. The Assembly obviously expected the papacy to submit to Scripture.” - Robert Letham

*This paragraph communicates the fundamental principle of “Sola Scriptura.” Sola Scriptura does not mean that we do not rely on others (including the church through the ages) to help us interpret Scripture. But it does mean that ultimately, Scripture alone is the Supreme Judge of all doctrines of the church.*

*This paragraph leads to a very important principle for Reformed and Protestant Christians - any teaching, creed, or confession of the church is amendable by future generations of the church based on a deeper understanding of the Scriptures. This principle applies to the Westminster Confession of Faith — and its writers intended that to be the case.*

*-Note the example of John Calvin's Institutes and the contemporary example of John Frame.*