

**THE SUFFICIENCY OF THE BIBLE**  
**The Privileges of the Christian Life**  
**Westminster Presbyterian Church**  
**October 25, 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. Review**

A. What is the Bible?

1. **Heb 1:1–2** – *“Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, <sup>2</sup>but 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.”*
2. 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.

B. The “Attributes” of Scripture

1. Sufficiency
2. Necessity

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

- a. **1 Pet 1:23** – *“... since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God.”*
3. 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

- a. **2 Tim 3:16** – *“All Scripture is breathed out (theopneustos) by God ...”*
- b. E.g., see Gen 12:3 and Gal 3:8. Or Heb 3:7, 4:7. Or Acts 1:16, 4:25, 28:25.
4. Perspicuity/Clarity

*“... It means only that the truth, the knowledge of which is necessary to everyone for salvation, though not spelled out with equal clarity on every page of Scripture, is nevertheless presented throughout all of Scripture in such a simple and intelligible form that a person concerned about the salvation of his or her soul can easily, by personal reading and study, learn to know that truth from Scripture without the assistance and guidance of the church and the priest.”* – Herman Bavinck

- a. **Acts 17:11** – *“... examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.”*

## II. 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... <sup>17</sup> 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.”

*“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*

## III. 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. <sup>21</sup> 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?”*  
– Robert Keene “How Firm a Foundation”