

Our Primary Authority: The Bible

The foundational principle of all Christian teaching is that the Bible is the very Word of God, by which every doctrine and practice must be tested (cf. Isa. 40:8; Matt. 5:18; 24:35; 2 Tim. 3:16; 1 Pet. 1:21, 25). The Bible and it alone, as the Word of Christ, is our final standard for all that we believe and do. The whole counsel of God in Scripture is our standard in every area of life and thought. We believe that the Bible, comprising the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, is the divinely inspired Word of God. As such it is our final authority.

Article 176. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, which are called canonical, being recognized as genuine and inspired, are received as the true and proper Word of God, infallible and inerrant, and the ultimate rule and measure of the whole Christian faith and doctrine. (RCUS *Constitution*, Part IV. Doctrine and Worship, Section 1, Doctrine)

The Spirit of God opens the hearts of God's chosen, covenant people to the truth revealed therein.

The Bible is the Inspired, Infallible, and Inerrant Word of God

The reason why the Bible is our final authority is due to the fact that it has as its primary author, God Himself. He gave his Holy Spirit to prophets and apostles in such a way that as they wrote, they wrote the Holy words that God. Our Belgic Confession describes this inspiration (Art. 3):

We confess that this Word of God was not sent nor delivered by the will of man, but that *men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit*, as the apostle Peter says; and that afterwards God, from a special care which He has for us and our salvation, commanded His servants, the prophets and apostles, to commit His revealed word to writing; and He Himself wrote with His own finger the two tables of the law. Therefore we call such writings holy and divine Scriptures.

Because it is inspired of God and therefore the absolute authority as truth; it is inerrant and infallible in all matters, including matters of history and science.