



One Dutch letter to go!

Hope Reformed Presbyterian Church

S is for Scripture

Every true body of believers that refers to itself as the Church, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets and whose cornerstone is Jesus Christ, considers God's Word as primary to its identity and worship. At Hope Reformed the Bible is absolutely foundational and the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy God. But what does that mean?

The Spirit of God, preserved in written form, has superintended the words of the apostles and prophets and has more clearly and fully made God known to us. This same Spirit confirms in us the truth of those words, and this is most necessary in order for us to know, assent to, and trust what is contained in His Word. Since it is the Spirit who teaches, we receive it for what it is, the Word of God, and not the word of man. We hold to the 66 infallible and inerrant canonical books as authoritative, necessary, sufficient, and perspicuous in all matters of life and faith.

Authority

Authority is the fundamental aspect of Scripture that sets it apart from all other writings. The Word of God is the truth. Because God Himself is the Arbiter of Truth, there can be nothing brought forward to contradict what is revealed. Bundled in this authority is the power and effectiveness by which the Spirit of God converts the soul, instructs the mind, and directs the will in all those who believe. It is the means by which the Spirit governs the Church, and all other documents and formularies used by the Church—whether creeds, catechisms, decisions, sermons, constitutions, or papers—are subject to it.

Necessity

From this aspect of authority flows necessity. There are no longer any apostles or prophets in the Church; there is no new revelation. The Spirit has caused the Canon to be written down and has now closed it. We therefore need these writings so that we are able to rightly know God and, by the work of the Spirit, hear the good news and believe without doubt what is taught in them.

Sufficiency

The closure of the canon does not mean we are deprived of any necessary revelation. What is received is sufficient for us to know what it is we are to believe and how we are to live. The Scriptures fully reveal the will of God so much so that it is forbidden to add to them or take away from them. This sufficiency means that the revelation, which God intends for our time, is complete, and we have no need of anything further.

Perspicuity

Being closed does not mean being hidden. While there are portions of Scripture that are challenging to the mind, the fundamental things necessary for us to know in this life are clearly and fully revealed. Such things as the creation and fall, the consequences of sin, the justice and mercy of God, the establishment of a covenant people, the Person and work of Jesus Christ, and the necessity of forgiveness and faith are all accessible, and that is the comfort we have—God has made Himself known to the Church in His Sacred Scripture.