



Confession of Faith Ratification Act 1690

1690 CHAPTER 7

CHAP. I. OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURE

ALTHOUGH the light of Nature and works of Creation and Providence do so far manifest the goodness wisdom and power of God as to leave men inexcusable yet are they not sufficient to give that knowledge of God and of his will which is necessary unto salvation Therefore it pleased the Lord at sundry times and in divers maners to reveal himself and to declare that his will unto his Church and afterwards 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 Scripture to be most necessary those former wayes of Gods revealing his will unto his people being now ceased

2

UNDER the name of the Holy Scripture or the word of God written are now contained all the books of the Old and New Testament 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 Songs Isaiah Jeremiah Lamentations Ezekiel Daniel Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah Jonah Micah Nahum Habbakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi Of The New Testament The Gospels according to Matthew Mark Luke John The Acts of the Apostles Pauls Epistles to the Romans I Corinthians II Corinthians Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians I Thessalonians II Thessalonians I to Timothy II to Timothy to Titus to Philemon The Epistle to the Hebrews The Epistle of James The first and second Epistles of Peter The first second and third Epistles of John The Epistle of Jude The Revelation of John All which are given by inspiration of God to be the rule of faith and life

3

THE Books commonly called Apocrypha not being of divine inspiration are no part of the Canon of the Scripture and therefore are of no authority in the Church of God nor to be any otherwise approved or made use of than other human writings

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4

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 it self) the author thereof and therefore it is to be received because it is the Word of God

5

We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the Church to an high and reverent esteem of the Holy Scripture And the heavenliness of the matter the efficacy of the doctrine 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 mans salvation the many other incomparable excellencies and the entire perfection thereof are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence it self 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

6

The whole counsell of God concerning all things necessary for his own glory mans salvation faith and life is either expresly set down in Scripture or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture unto which nothing at any time is to be added whether by new revelations of the Spirit or traditions of men 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 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 generall rules of the word which are always to be observed

7

ALL things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves nor alike clear unto all 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 the ordinary means may attain to a sufficient understanding of them

8

THE OLD Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old) and the New Testament in Greek (which at the time of the writing of it was most generally known to the nations) being immediatly inspired by God and by his singular care and providence kept pure in all ages are therefore authentically so as in all controversies of Religion the Church is finally to appeal unto them but because these originall tongues are not known to all the people of God who have right unto and interest in the Scriptures and are commanded in the fear of God to read and search them therefore they are to be translated into the vulgar language of every nation unto which they come 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

9

THE infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture it self and therefore when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture (which is not

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manifold but one) it must be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly

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 Spirit speaking in the Scripture

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