

BAPTISTS & THE BIBLE

By John H. Kohler

I believe the Holy Scriptures to be the word of God, and have the only authority to bind the conscience to the obedience of all therein contained, and are the all sufficient rule, by the Spirit of God to guide a man in all his obedience both to God and man **(John Spilsbury, 1643)**.

The rule of this knowledge, faith, and obedience, concerning the worship and service of God, and all other Christian duties, is not man's inventions, opinions, devices, laws, constitutions, or traditions unwritten whatsoever, but only the word of God contained in the Canonical Scriptures. John 5:39; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Col. 2:18, 23; Mat. 15:9 **(London Confession of Faith, 1644)**.

The rule of this knowledge, faith, and obedience, concerning the worship of God, in which is contained the whole duty of man, is (not men's laws, or unwritten traditions, but) only the word of God contained [viz., written] in the holy Scriptures; in which is plainly recorded whatsoever is needful for us to know, believe, and practice; which are the only rule of holiness and obedience for all saints, at all times, in all places to be observed. Col. 2:23; Matt 15:6,9; John 5:39, 2 Tim. 3:15,16,17; Isa. 8:20; Gal. 1:8,9; Acts 3:22,23.

(London Confession of Faith, 1646).

We profess and believe the Holy Scriptures, the Old and New Testament, to be the word and revealed mind of God, which are able to make men wise unto Salvation, through faith and love which is in Christ Jesus; and that they are given by inspiration of God, serving to furnish the man of God for every

good work; and by them we are (in the strength of Christ) to try all things whatsoever are brought to us, under the pretence of truth. II Timothy iii.15-17; Isaiah viii.20. **(Midland Confession of Faith, 1655).**

Of the Holy Scriptures

1. The Holy Scripture is the only sufficient, certain, and infallible rule of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience, although the light of nature, and the 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 his will which is necessary unto salvation. Therefore it pleased the Lord at sundry times and in divers manners to reveal himself, and to declare that his will unto his church; and afterward 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 Scriptures to be most necessary, those former ways of God's revealing his will unto his people being now ceased. (2 Timothy 3:15-17; Isaiah 8:20; Luke 16:29, 31; Ephesians 2:20; Romans 1:19-21; Romans 2:14,15; Psalms 19:1-3; Hebrews 1:1; Proverbs 22:19-21; Romans 15:4; 2 Peter 1:19,20).

2. Under the name of Holy Scripture, or the Word of God written, are now contained all the books of the Old and New Testaments, 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 Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi
OF THE NEW TESTAMENT: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, The Acts of the

Apostles, Paul's Epistle to the Romans, I Corinthians, II Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, I Thessalonians, II Thessalonians, I Timothy, II Timothy, To Titus, To Philemon, The Epistle to the Hebrews, Epistle of James, The first and second Epistles of Peter, The first, second, and third Epistles of John, The Epistle of Jude, The Revelation. All of which are given by the inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life. (2 Timothy 3:16)

3. The books commonly called Apocrypha, not being of divine inspiration, are no part of the canon or rule of the Scripture, and, therefore, are of no authority to the church of God, nor to be any otherwise approved or made use of than other human writings. (Luke 24:27, 44; Romans 3:2)

4. The authority of the Holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed, dependeth not upon the testimony of any man or church, but wholly upon God (who is truth itself), the author thereof; therefore it is to be received because it is the Word of God. (2 Peter 1:19-21; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 John 5:9)

5. We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the church of God to an high and reverent esteem of the Holy Scriptures; and the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, and 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 man's salvation, and many other incomparable excellencies, and entire perfections thereof, are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself 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.

(John 16:13,14; 1 Corinthians 2:10-12; 1 John 2:20, 27)

6. The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down or necessarily contained in the Holy Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelation 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 general rules of the Word, which are always to be observed. (2 Timothy 3:15-17; Galatians 1:8,9; John 6:45; 1 Corinthians 2:9-12; 1 Corinthians 11:13, 14; 1 Corinthians 14:26,40)

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 ordinary means, may attain to a sufficient understanding of them. (2 Peter 3:16; Psalms 19:7; Psalms 119:130)

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 immediately inspired by God, and by his singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentic; so as in all controversies of

religion, the church is finally to appeal to them. But because these original tongues are not known to all the people of God, who have a 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. (Romans 3:2; Isaiah 8:20; Acts 15:15; John 5:39; 1 Corinthians 14:6, 9, 11, 12, 24, 28; Colossians 3:16).

9. 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 by other places that speak more clearly. (2 Peter 1:20, 21; Acts 15:15, 16)

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 Scripture delivered by the Spirit, into which Scripture so delivered, our faith is finally resolved. (Matthew 22:29, 31, 32; Ephesians 2:20; Acts 28:23)

(London Confession of Faith, 1677/89).

Concerning the holy scriptures, we believe, that the scriptures of the old and new testament are the written word and will of God, given by inspiration to the holy prophets and apostles; and are left upon record for our learning, that we through patience, and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope; and that they are a perfect rule, containing all things necessary to salvation;

they being the counsel of God concerning all things necessary for his own glory, and the eternal good of souls, relating both to matters of faith and practice, especially the doctrine of the gospel therein contained (**A Short Confession or Brief Narrative of Faith, 1691**).

We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the word of God, and the only rule of faith and practice (**The Goat Yard Declaration of Faith, 1792**).

The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, and are the only sufficient, certain and authoritative rule of all saving knowledge, faith and obedience (**The Abstract of Principles, 1858**).

Of the Scriptures

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction (1); that it has God for its author, salvation for its end (2), and truth without any mixture of error for its matter (3); that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us (4); and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union (5), and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried (6).

1. 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:21; 1 Sam. 23:2; Acts 1:16; 3:21; John 10:35; Luke 16:29-31; Psa. 119:11; Rom. 3:1-2

2. 2 Tim. 3:15; 1 Pet. 1:10-12; Acts 11:14; Rom. 1:16; Mark 16:16; John 5:38-39

3. Prov. 30:5-6; John 17:17; Rev. 22:18-19; Rom. 3:4

4. Rom. 2:12; John 12:47-48; 1 Cor. 4:3-4; Luke 10:10-16; 12:47-48

5. Phil. 3:16; Eph. 4:3-6; Phil. 2:1-2; 1 Cor. 1:10; 1 Pet. 4:11

6. 1 John 4:1; Isa. 8:20; 1 Thess. 5:21; 2 Cor. 8:5; Acts 17:11; 1 John

4:6; Jude 3:5; Eph. 6:17; Psa. 119:59-60; Phil. 1:9-11
(New Hampshire Confession of Faith, 1833).

I. Of the Scriptures

We believe that the Holy Bible was (a) written by men supernaturally inspired; (b) that it has truth without any admixture of error for its matter; and (c) therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the age, the only complete and final revelation of the will of God to man; the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions should be tried.

(Explanatory)

1. By "THE HOLY BIBLE" we mean that collection of sixty- six books, from Genesis to Revelation, which, as originally written, does not contain and convey the word of God, but IS the very Word of God. 2. By "INSPIRATION" we mean that the books of the Bible were written by holy men of old, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, in such a definite way that their writings were supernaturally inspired and free from error, as no other writings have ever been or ever will be inspired. **(Baptist Bible Union of America, 1923).**

The Scriptures

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction; that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter; that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us; and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and religious opinion should be tried. **(Baptist Faith & Message, 1925).**

The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is the record of God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. It reveals the principles by which God judges us; and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. The criterion by which the Bible is to be interpreted is Jesus Christ.

(Baptist Faith & Message, 1963).

The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation. Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21. **(Baptist Faith & Message, 2000).**

We believe in the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, and believe also that the Bible is

infallible and inerrant in all matters of which it speaks. We believe that the Bible is, and shall remain to the end of the age, the supreme and final authority in all matters of Christian belief and practice.

We further believe that the original language texts which are equivalent to the original autographs of the Holy Scriptures are the Masoretic Hebrew Text (Old Testament) and the Greek Textus Receptus (New Testament), and that the King James Version of the Bible (A.D. 1611) is a true and faithful translation of these two providentially-preserved texts. The King James Version of the Bible serves as *the* textbook in our church.

Mat. 4:4; Jn. 17:8; I Cor. 2:13; Rev. 22:18-19; II Tim. 3:15-17; II Pet. 1:21; Ps. 119:160; Jn. 17:17; Ps. 19:7-11; Prov. 30:5-6; Isa. 8:20; Rom. 3:4; Ps. 12:6-7; Osa. 40:8; Mat. 5:17-18; 24:35; Lk. 16:17; Jn. 10:35; 12:48; I Pet. 1:23-25

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