

Denominational Concerns

Open Forum #1

**The Meaning and Authority of
Scripture in the
Life of the Church**

Basics of the Scriptures

- Theories of Inspiration
- Theories of Authority
- Methods of Interpretation

Theories of Inspiration

- Inerrancy
- Infallibility
- Unique and Authoritative
- word of God and word of man
- word of man

Inerrancy

- The Bible is completely accurate in all that it affirms, including history and science

Infallibility

- The Bible is the infallible rule of faith and practice

Unique and Authoritative

- The Bible is the unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ

word of God and word of man

- **Portions of the Bible, including some of its theological and ethical positions, may not be the inspired Word of God**

word of man

- **The Bible is merely a record of the moral and religious experiences of the Hebrews and Christians**

**Your theory of Inspiration
has a significant impact on
Biblical Authority**

Innerancy

- The Bible's authority is unquestionable whatever it speaks

Infallibility

- The Bible's authority is unquestionable when it speaks to faith and life.

Unique and Authoritative

- The Bible's authority is unquestionable whenever it speaks to Jesus Christ

word of God and word of man

- The Bible's authority is unquestionable where the Spirit or scholarly study reveals it to be the Word of God.

word of man

- **The Bible's authority is questionable and may need to be revised**

Impact on Interpretation

- **Inerrancy:** The Bible is to be interpreted in light of its cultural and literary context and assumed to be true

- **Infallibility:** The Bible is to be interpreted in light of its cultural and literary context in light of its message on faith and life

- **Unique and Authoritative:**
**The Bible is to be interpreted
in light of its culture and
literary context as it speaks
to Jesus**

- **word of God and word of man: The Bible is to be interpreted in light of its cultural and literary context through a philosophical lens**

- **word of man: the Bible can be interpreted liberally in light of one's own personal experience and values**

The Confessions

- The Scot's Confession
- 3.19-As we believe and confess the Scriptures of God sufficient to instruct and make perfect the man of God, so do we affirm and avow their authority to be from God, and not to depend on men or angels

- **The Shorter Catechism**
- **7.003-Question #3: What do the Scriptures principally teach?**
- **Answer: The Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man.**

- **The Larger Catechism**
- **7.113-Question #3: What is the Word of God?**
- **Answer: The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the Word of God, the only rule of faith and obedience.**

- **Second Helvetic Confession**
- **5.001-CANONICAL SCRIPTURE.** We believe and confess the canonical Scriptures of the holy prophets and apostles of both Testaments to be the true Word of God, and to have sufficient authority of themselves, not of men. For God himself spoke to the fathers, prophets, apostles, and still speaks to us through the Holy Scriptures.

Scripture within the PCUSA

- The Adopting Act of 1729
- The refining of the Adopting Act in 1758
- BB Warfield and the Doctrinal Deliverance of 1910
- The Auburn Declaration and General Assembly of 1927

The Result: PUP Report 2006

“In order to allow the Scriptures to speak to us clearly and fully, the Reformed approach continues to embrace a variety of models of biblical authority and interpretation, each highlighting values that Presbyterians have historically held to be important.”

The Bible on its Inspiration and Authority

- **Proverbs 30:5-6-Every word of God is flawless; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him. Do not add to his words, or he will rebuke you and prove you a liar.**

Listen to the Word of God

vs

Listen for the Word of God

- **Psalm 19:7-The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple.**

- **Matthew 4:4-Jesus answered,
"It is written: 'Man does not
live on bread alone, but on
every word that comes from
the mouth of God.' "**

- **Matthew 5:18-I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.**

- **1 Thessalonians 2:13-And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe.**

- **2 Timothy 3:16-17-All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.**

SCRIPTURE AT FPCD

- The Bible is the only infallible rule of faith and practice. The Holy Spirit spoke through its authors and witnesses to us today that it is indeed and in truth the very Word of God, God's gift to the world and guide for His people.

Essential Tenets 2007

- **The Bible is God's inspired and authoritative word for faith and life.**

FPCD Core Values

Implications

- **FPCD is committed to the inspiration and authority of Scripture and will not change her mind**

Implications

- The PCUSA does not take a particular stand on the inspiration or authority of scripture and none of its governing bodies are allowed to do so either.









