

Human Creeds & the Bible

by Bill Crews

“The Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite nor necessary to salvation. In the name of the Holy Scriptures we do understand those canonical books of the Old and New Testament of whose authority was never in doubt in the Church.” -- Article V of “The Articles of Religion,” from The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, p. 38, 1968 edition.”

“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 shall remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried.” -- Article I of “The New Hampshire Confession of Faith,” as found in The Hiscox Standard Baptist Manual, 1965 edition, p. 137 (pages 43 and 44 of the Baptist Church Manual by J. M. Pendleton, 1961 edition)

“The whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man’s salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly 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 by traditions of men.” -- Chapter I (“Of the Holy Scripture”), article VI, of The Westminster Confession of Faith.

The Holy Scriptures profess to be the revelation of God’s will to men, inspired, complete, authoritative and understandable (2 Pet. 1:20-21; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; John 16:8-13; 2 Pet. 1:3; 1 Pet. 4:11; 1 Cor. 2:1-13). The above-quoted creeds of men concur and accord them the honor they deserve, but if we already have every thing we need and every thing God wanted us to have in the Scriptures, why do fallible men write creeds anyway? Do they not divide, rather than unite men? Are they not as fallible and as errant as the men who formulate them? And are they not, by implication, a declaration that the Scriptures are either not complete (but they aver that they are complete) or not clear, and an attempt to either complete them or clarify them?

Let us be content with the Scriptures or the Bible, abide by it, and lay aside human creeds.

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