

THE GREAT INTERPRETER OF THE BIBLE

The ninth chapter names the great interpreter of the Scripture. This is not a pope, nor a professor. It is not Luther or Calvin or Wesley. It is not even the Westminster Confession of Faith. Nor is it our idea of what is coherent, or what may seem to us logically to belong to a proper system. It is the Scripture itself.

The Westminster Confession is one of the great Calvinistic creeds. Naturally it follows the view of Calvin himself, ^{who} ~~which~~ put the Bible high above all creeds. Truth is coherent with itself, and all truths together form a system of truth. But Calvin insisted that each element must be gained directly from the Scripture. The human mind is too prone to error to permit it to build its system apart from dependence on the Bible at every point.

According to the Westminster Confession the sole infallible rule of interpretation of a passage of Scripture is other passages of Scripture. Plainly ~~it~~ it upholds the scientific method of approach to the data of the Word. We must gather all the data on a given subject. If we leave out any passage that deals with ^{the particular subject} ~~it~~, we are in danger of making a false interpretation. We must interpret difficult passages in the light of plain ones. We must go from ~~the~~ simple to the complex. We must use exactly the same method of gaining truth in religion as we would in any other field of science. The Scripture itself is the only infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture.

It is worthy of note, also, that all Scripture is included in this authority. Our knowledge must not come from human speculation or logic, but from God's Word. We must be constantly be alert to gain new insights into every part of the Bible. All of it is important. No one book or section is singled out. Sometimes I hear a book of the Bible cast aside with the statement: "Oh, that is a symbolic book. We must base our doctrine upon the didactic portions of the New Testament". Such an attitude is in direct opposition to the views of the Westminster Confession of Faith, ^{which} ~~is~~