

# THE BIBLICAL AND LOGICAL NECESSITY OF UNINSPIRED CREEDS

by

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*"Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." -- 2 Timothy 1:13.*

*"And he gave . . . pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine." -- Ephesians 4:11-14.*

*"Also [they] caused the people to understand the law: and the people stood in their place. So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading." -- Nehemiah 8:7-8.*

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To see the unavoidable necessity of uninspired creeds, consider the following conversation between Hans (a *paleo-presbyterian*) and Franz (a *neo-presbyterian*):

**HANS:** We're studying the Westminster Confession of Faith. Want to join us?

**FRANZ:** No; I don't give heed to the words of men like you do.

**H:** What do you mean?

**F:** I go by the Bible. I can't rely on the words of mere uninspired men.

**H:** Me, too. That's why we're studying the Confession. You should join us; it'd be very edifying.

**F:** Wait a minute. I just told you that I only go by the Bible, and yet you have just equated the study of this Westminster Confession with a study of the Scriptures!

**H:** And as I just said, I only go by the Bible, too. So, I'm not going to pay any attention to what you've just said. You're not inspired, after all.

**F:** Of course I'm not inspired; but what I said was right because it was BIBLICAL.

**H:** How could it be biblical if it was merely what you -- an uninspired man -- told me? I only listen to the inspired words of the Bible. Isn't it lording it over my conscience to tell me to accept your uninspired words as though they were the very inspired words of God?

**F:** Oh, come on. I may not have quoted chapter and verse, but I was telling you what the Bible MEANS. That's why you have to pay attention to it.

**H:** Are you saying the meaning of the Bible, even if explained in the uninspired words of uninspired men, is still binding -- in fact, as binding as the very words written in the Bible?

**F:** Well, yes, that is what I'm saying. The meaning of the Bible, though stated in different words, has the same authority as the exact words found there. And since I'm telling you that the meaning of the Bible is not to give heed to the uninspired words of men, you still have to receive it as though those exact words I've spoken were written in the pages of Scripture.

**H:** Wait a minute. How is what you've just said any different from the Westminster Confession? After all, the writers of the Confession were only putting forth what they thought was the meaning of the Bible.

**F:** Well, er. . . umm. . . .

**H:** I know of one difference: they were all preeminently qualified to expound the Word of God. They were recognized as having these gifts by the various churches that delegated them to sit at the Westminster Assembly. Any scholar who knows anything about Protestant history knows that these men were the "cream of the crop", and that almost certainly there has never been since that time (and maybe even up to that time, except for the apostles themselves) one body containing so many godly and learned men. I don't think you possess the same qualifications, at least not yet.

**F:** Hmmm, good point.

**H:** Furthermore, the Holy Spirit says in Ephesians 4 that Christ has given to the church teachers as a powerful and necessary means to building up the body of Christ into "a perfect or complete man". Obviously, these teachers do not have the gift of inspiration, and yet the Spirit didn't view this as a challenge to the sufficiency of Scripture, but rather as a necessary outgrowth

of it. This is because he desires that we know the meaning of the Bible, not just the bare words. As R.L. Dabney said, "He who would consistently banish creeds must silence all preaching and reduce the teaching of the church to the recital of the exact words of Holy Scripture without note or comment."

And, just because these men lived in the past doesn't mean that they're not a gift from God to us today. The Bible everywhere speaks of the church as one body throughout all history (*Gal. 3:23-24; 4:1-3; Ps. 66:6; Hos. 12:4; Deut. 5:2-3*). Therefore, the astute teachers of the past are our teachers as well, thanks to God's gracious preservation of their writings. Actually, because these men were on the crest of the waves of reformation, and not in the trough of apostasy as we are today, we ought to pay more attention to them than to contemporary teachers. This is because all of us -- including our teachers -- have been blinded by our culture's wretched and extreme departure from the Lord Jesus Christ.

**F:** What time did you say you were meeting? I believe the meaning of Scripture requires that I attend!