

A Faith to Live By

An Independent Study of the
Westminster Confession of Faith

How to use this study guide effectively each week:

1. **Pray** that the Holy Spirit would use the week's material to increase your knowledge of God and His Word. (see Psalm 119:1-8)
2. **Read the Confession of Faith** (WCF) sections listed. Read the proof texts too.
3. **Memorize the Scripture** verse(s) listed.
(Sometimes they may not line up with the particular WCF sections, but they all build to give good memory references for the overall chapter.)
4. **Work through the discussion questions.**
It is best to write down your answers.
The questions may sometimes be difficult. Think, pray, ponder. Don't worry if you don't have answers to everything! We will discuss at our monthly meeting.
Our main goal is thoughtfulness on the matters of God's Word, not getting everything right or clear the first time through.
5. **Come to the monthly discussion** prepared to interact with the material.

February

Week 1 (2/2)

- Read: WCF 30.1

- Memorize: Eph. 1:22-23

And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

- Study questions:

Section 1

1. Why do you think is it significant that Christ is described as “king and head of his church”?
2. What are some implications of church government being distinct from the civil magistrate?
3. How does the appointment of church officers reflect Christ’s authority over the church?
4. In what ways can confusion arise when the roles of church and civil government are conflated?

Week 3 (2/16)

- Read: WCF 30.3

- Memorize: 1Cor. 5:6-7

Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

- Study questions:

Section 3

9. Why does the Confession view church censures as “necessary”?

10. How do church censures serve the purpose of reclaiming and restoring offending brethren?

11. What role do church censures play in upholding the honor of Christ and the gospel?

12. How does this paragraph emphasize the corporate nature of the church in its responsibility toward sin?

Week 4 (2/23)

- Read: WCF 26.4

- Memorize: Matt. 18:15-17

If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

- Study questions:

Section 4

13. How does the progression from admonition to suspension and excommunication reflect the gravity of sin and the goal of restoration?

14. In what ways do these practices demonstrate both the justice and mercy of Christ?

15. Why is it essential to consider the “nature of the crime” and “demerit of the person” in administering church discipline?

Monthly Discussion: Thursday, March 6 @ 7:00pm