

Questions for Further Reflection – The Westminster Confession of Faith

1. How do you think the historical and social context Pastor Tim described influenced the work of the Westminster Assembly? How do you think the historical and social context of our time influences the church today? What things are we focused on that they weren't and vice-versa? Where do you see modern-day Puritans at work in the church, people who want to purify the church and return the church to its Scriptural roots?
2. Pastor Tim said that in the end, the Westminster Assembly failed in what it set out to do. Yet it is one of the most broadly accepted and influential confessions of the Reformed faith, setting the standard for Reformed Doctrine for centuries. When have you failed in something you set out to do? What positive things came into your life as a result of that failure? How did you grow? What did you learn? Were there unintended consequences that were positive? How does this help us understand the doctrine of the Sovereignty of God?
3. The Westminster Confession makes it clear that when it comes to salvation, God is the primary actor. How would this have been a comforting thought to the people of that time? How might it be a comfortable thought to us today? What is it about our cultural and social context that makes it an uncomfortable idea for us today? Why do so many people insist that there is something that we have to or must do in order to be saved? What do you think it is about our society that makes this such an appealing idea?
4. What does the Westminster Confession say about the authority of Scripture? What does it mean *to you* to say that Scripture has authority for your life?
5. The Westminster Confession urges us to use Scripture to interpret Scripture, to let the clear things in Scripture help us interpret those that are unclear. Make a list of some things that are clear in Scripture. Now make a list of some things that are unclear in Scripture. How might the first list help in interpreting the second? Christians don't argue over the things that are clear because they can't! They are clear! We argue over the unclear things. What are some things Christians are arguing over in our social and cultural context? How might the things that are clear help us to find a way through these arguments?