

APPENDIX 3: THE CONFESSION OF 1967

[“The **Confession of 1967** is a confessional standard of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (short: PC(USA)). The Special Committee on a Brief Contemporary Statement of Faith began preparing the *Confession of 1967* in 1958 as a response to the Presbytery of Amarillo's 1957 overture to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America for an updated version of the Westminster Shorter Catechism in contemporary language. After considering the rewrite of the Catechism, the General Assembly instead decided to draft a new, contemporary statement of faith to be included in the constitution of the church after its 1958 union with the United Presbyterian Church of North America. The Special Committee's report was first presented to the UPCUSA's General Assembly in 1965. The committee was chaired by Edward Dowey, Jr., professor at Princeton Theological Seminary. It was written as a modern statement of the faith of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, the ‘northern church,’ to supplement the Westminster Confession and the other statements of faith in its new *Book of Confessions*.

“The document was influenced by the neo-orthodox views of Karl Barth, Emil Brunner and other theologians of the age, reflecting the view of Scripture espoused by the corresponding ‘Biblical theology’ movement prominent in mainline Protestant theological schools in the mid twentieth century. During the consideration of its adoption by the presbyteries, conservatives who desired the continuance of strict subscription to only Westminster and the Catechisms campaigned against its inclusion.”

(Wikipedia article “Confession of 1967”; accessed 7/12/12)]

I. God's Work of Reconciliation

C. The Communion of the Holy Spirit

2. The Bible

The one sufficient revelation of God is Jesus Christ, the Word of God incarnate, to whom the Holy Spirit bears unique and authoritative witness through the Holy Scriptures, which are received and obeyed as the word of God written. The Scriptures are not a witness among others, but the witness without parallel. The

church has received the books of the Old and New Testaments as prophetic and apostolic testimony in which it hears the word of God and by which its faith and obedience are nourished and regulated.

The New Testament is the recorded testimony of apostles to the coming of the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, and the sending of the Holy Spirit to the Church. The Old Testament bears witness to God's faithfulness in his covenant with Israel and points the way to the fulfillment of his purpose in Christ. The Old Testament is indispensable to understanding the New, and is not itself fully understood without the New.

The Bible is to be interpreted in the light of its witness to God's work of reconciliation in Christ. The Scriptures, given under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, are nevertheless the words of men, conditioned by the language, thought forms, and literary fashions of the places and times at which they were written. They reflect views of life, history, and the cosmos which were then current. The church, therefore, has an obligation to approach the Scriptures with literary and historical understanding. As God has spoken his word in diverse cultural situations, the church is confident that he will continue to speak through the Scriptures in a changing world and in every form of human culture.

God's word is spoken to his church today where the Scriptures are faithfully preached and attentively read in dependence on the illumination of the Holy Spirit and with readiness to receive their truth and direction.