

## Chapter 1 : University Presbyterian Church, Seattle: Our Beliefs

*Thinkers of our faith. We believe that God has given us minds to use for his service. We believe that the life of the mind is a service to God. Therefore, we study our faith in order to love God with our mind, as well as our heart and soul. Encouraged by what we believe God can do.*

Our Beliefs First, we are followers of Christ. God is creator of the universe: The Holy Spirit is the presence of God in the world and in the believer. The forgiveness of sin is made possible by the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. Life everlasting and the resurrection of the body is ours because Jesus rose from the dead on the third day. The Bible is the inspired word of God. Second, we are Protestants. We share beliefs in common with other denominations that split from the Roman Catholic Church in the sixteenth century as well as those that were founded later: Protestants believe in justification by faith. We are justified, or brought into a right relationship with God through grace. This does not happen by our own effort, but by the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. Protestants also believe in the authority of scripture. Scripture is the written revelation of God and always points through the Holy Spirit, to the living revelation of God in Christ. The purpose of scripture is to bring persons to salvation and guide them in living a life of faith. Central to this tradition is the affirmation of the majesty, holiness, and providence of God who creates, sustains, rules, and redeems the world in the freedom of sovereign righteousness and love. Third, our Presbyterian creeds and confessions emphasize: The Sovereignty of God: We know the actions of God are intentional and directed toward the accomplishment of his purposes in his creation. God also uses human means in history to accomplish his purposes, yet such means do not involve coercion. We are still responsible for our decisions and actions. Scripture calls us to both concepts. Before we ever said yes to God, God said yes to us. The central point is that the initiative belongs to God, and we respond to Him. We cannot boast in the fact that we say yes to his salvation. Election is the Reformed way of saying "grace alone. God has made a covenant, or promise, with his people. This has always been a covenant of grace. Stewardship is an attitude toward all of creation. We are creatures given the responsibility as stewards, or servants, to care for all God has created. Grace motivates us to live in gratitude. Redemption calls us to respond in thankfulness by caring for all that God has given us. As we recognize that all life, faith, love, and every other gift comes from God, so we recognize our responsibility to render back a portion of what has been given us in these areas. This "rendering back" might include time, talent, and treasures. Stewardship is a spiritual matter, not a synonym for raising money. Calvin argued that knowledge of God is implanted in every human heart, but is suppressed by human sin. People actively choose not to acknowledge God as their creator and instead create idolsâ€”defined as anything we create that we give our ultimate allegiance to. We are to be obedient to the Word of God, which directs us to work for justice in the transformation of society. Questions for Presbyterians Some of the most commonly asked questions about what Presbyterians believe are about the following topics: The souls of the faithful are reunited with God in a warm and loving relationship for eternity. Hell is separation from God and may exist now as well as in the hereafter. Mary is honored as the mother of Jesus, the special person chosen to bear the Son of God. The resurrection of the body refers to the reuniting of the spiritual body and physical body. This is voluntary and made directly to God, although it may be made in the presence of another believer. God grants the gift of grace unmerited favor , which enables us to gain the faith necessary for salvation. We are saved by grace rather than by good deeds, correct beliefs, or human ceremonies. It is not possible to earn salvationâ€”it can only be accepted with thanksgiving and joy. The empty cross symbolizes the risen Christ who opened the kingdom of heaven. The Sacredness of Marriage: Marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out lives of discipleship together before God. Presbyterians admit different understandings of the Confession of Faith. This is because they believe the church should be open to the reform of its standards of doctrine. Presbyterians place a great deal of stress on education, both for the ministry and for the laity. No Christian church has exclusive possession of the church government authorized by Christ. Presbyterians recognize two sacraments as described in the Bible:

## Chapter 2 : Our Beliefs | First Presbyterian Church Marietta

*The official creeds, confessions, and beliefs of the Presbyterian Church, including the Nicene Creed, the Apostles' Creed, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Westminster Confession of faith, are all contained within a document called The Book of Confessions.*

In his loving kindness he created the world and rules over it. We believe in the sovereignty of God, who created us in his own image out of love, but because of our sin, we have alienated and separated ourselves from him. We believe that Jesus Christ died on the cross and rose again because he loves and forgives us, and through his act of reconciliation reconnects believers to God. We believe Jesus Christ is the way to a renewed relationship with God the Father and that salvation from sin and death is found in no one other than Jesus Christ. We are saved by grace, through faith, not by works. We believe that God calls us to live out our Christianity within the community called the Church, and that God loves the Church so much that he has established Jesus Christ as its head and that we should model our own lives in accordance with his teaching.

Book of Confessions 3. Book of Order W Jesus Christ, as the Son of God is God, was born of a virgin and became a human being. Jesus became fully human and fully divine. Book of Confessions 4. Jesus Christ suffered human rejection and hatred, dying on the cross. His death was an act of atonement for the sins of the whole human race. This act of grace freed us to be reconnected to God. He rose from the dead, thus demonstrating his power over sin and death. By his resurrection, we who believe are given assurance and gift of our own resurrection to be lived eternally in the presence of God. We claim Jesus as our Lord. Salvation from sin and death is found in no one other than Jesus Christ because of his grace. There is no other name, system or power—natural or supernatural—under heaven given to humankind by which we can be saved. The Holy Spirit both compels us and empowers us to serve each other, our community, and the world in the manner of Christ. We believe the Bible is the Word of Truth, and has authority over our lives, requiring our obedience to it. God has called us to organize ourselves as the Church with Christ as our head. The life of Jesus was one of close relationships. As Christians, we view relationships and family as a priority in our lives, recognizing that human relationships are a blessing and gift from God. We respect and honor the sanctity of Christian marriage between a man and a woman, as compared biblically to the relationship of Christ with his Church. We rely on the greatest of the commandments, as given by Jesus, to love God with our whole being, and to love our neighbors as ourselves. We strive always to offer our lives as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, not conforming to the patterns of this world, but being transformed by the renewal of our hearts and minds. We believe that we as the Body of Christ are called to live out the Great Commandments, of loving God with all our heart, soul, and mind; and to love our neighbor as ourselves and to be in community, while carrying out the Great Commission of making disciples of all nations and baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

### Chapter 3 : Cumberland Presbyterian - Our Beliefs

*The PC(USA) summarizes Presbyterian beliefs this way: God is the supreme authority throughout the universe. Our knowledge of God and God's purpose for humanity comes from the Bible, particularly what is revealed in the New Testament through the life of Jesus Christ.*

Presbyterian A general guide to facts about the Presbyterian Church U. Presbyterians trace their history to the 16th century and the Protestant Reformation. Our heritage, and much of what we believe, began with the French lawyer John Calvin , whose writings crystallized much of the Reformed thinking that came before him. Calvin did much of his writing from Geneva, Switzerland. From there, the Reformed movement spread to other parts of Europe and the British Isles. The first American Presbytery was organized at Philadelphia in 1789. The first General Assembly was held in the same city in 1789. The first Assembly was convened by the Rev. John Witherspoon, the only minister to sign the Declaration of Independence. Who are we Presbyterians? Questions have been raised about the position of the Presbyterian Church U. It is always helpful to compare parallel categories. Sometimes the official positions of one body are compared with a characterization of the other body. Learn more A little Presbyterian history Portions of the Presbyterian church in the United States have separated from the main body, and some parts have reunited, several times. The greatest division occurred in 1861 during the American Civil War. The two branches created by that division were reunited in 1903 to form the Presbyterian Church U. Learn more Presbyterian theological beliefs Some of the principles articulated by John Calvin remain at the core of Presbyterian beliefs. Among these are the sovereignty of God, the authority of the scripture, justification by grace through faith and the priesthood of all believers. What they mean is that God is the supreme authority throughout the universe. That is also why the Presbyterian church is governed at all levels by a combination of clergy and laity, men and women alike. Learn more What is distinctive about Presbyterian Church? Presbyterians are distinctive in two major ways:

## Chapter 4 : Our Beliefs | First Presbyterian Church

*Presbyterians trace their history to the 16th century and the Protestant Reformation. Our heritage, and much of what we believe, began with the French lawyer John Calvin (), whose writings crystallized much of the Reformed thinking that came before him. Calvin did much of his writing from Geneva, Switzerland.*

They may not have considered some of the contrasts between their former tradition and the Presbyterian heritage. Others who have been Presbyterian all their lives have picked up a fair amount of their religious ideas, not from church school, but from notions floating about in the culture at large. Salvation by good works American popular religion supposes that the good people go to heaven and the bad people go to hell. If you have done a good enough job being righteous, you will be rewarded in heaven after you die. So the question is, are you good enough? Although there is a certain commonsense logic to this, Presbyterians have always insisted following the apostle Paul that no one is good enough. We are saved only by grace. Despite our failure, God decided to save us through the incarnation, death and resurrection of Jesus. Reincarnation Various Eastern religions propose that when you die, you are reborn as another person or animal. All the world has been on an endless cycle of death and rebirth: Presbyterians argue that Scripture does not teach reincarnation; it points us toward eternal life in the presence of God. Moreover, believing in reincarnation is a very severe form of believing in works righteousness, because reincarnation teaches that you must live your life over and over until you have attained to a level of goodness that frees you from the rounds of human existence. Fate Some believe that every event may be caused by previous events. If so, it is an illusion to suppose that your decisions actually change anything. If you do a good deed, that is what you were fated to do. If you do something evil, that is just the outworking of your predetermined fate. This is different from the Presbyterian doctrine of predestination, which says God chose to redeem us, long before we could even understand what that might mean. Because God chose us before the foundation of the world, that means we are predestined to life. That does not take away our ability to choose; we make many trivial-but-free choices every day. Beyond that, predestination teaches us that God has given us a new and bigger freedom: Transubstantiation In Holy Communion we receive the presence of Christ to strengthen our faith and life. How does that happen? The Roman Catholic view is that the substance of the bread and wine is transformed to become the substance of the body and blood of Christ. Presbyterians argue that Christ is genuinely present in these elements, but it is a spiritual presence, rather than a physical presence. That is, it is not a question of molecules of bread becoming molecules of human flesh. Instead, it is Christ coming to dwell within us, as he promised to do. Altars An altar is a place where a sacrifice is offered and it is often viewed with special reverence. In the traditional Roman Catholic understanding the priest re-offers Christ on the altar as a sacrifice to God. Presbyterians believe the sacrifice of Christ has already been offered once for all, it needs no repetition, and the action of a priest cannot make it occur again. Although many Communion tables are rather ornate, the table itself holds no particular significance or holiness; it is simply a supper table. Purgatory Where do people go when they die? Our lives are still impure when we die; how can we exist in heaven, alongside the holiness of God? This was a worthy speculation, but Presbyterians believe it is not necessary. God will indeed redeem us and cleanse us from all our sins and we will be readied for heaven without our needing to postulate a third possible place to go when we die. Limbo Ah, but what about unbaptized babies who die? The medieval argument ran this way: They never got a chance to grow up and become wicked, so it seems unjust to condemn them to hell. There is no point in sending them to purgatory to purge away their sins, because they did not live long enough to commit any. On the other hand, they were not baptized, so they cannot go to heaven. They must end up in some fourth place, limbo, instead. Presbyterians give an answer parallel to the one regarding purgatory: God will take care of this, and we do not need to speculate on yet another place in the afterlife. Historic succession of bishops Where does the authority of the church reside? Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Orthodox, Methodist and Episcopal churches believe it is carried in the office of the bishop. Bishops receive their authority from previous bishops, all of whom received their authority from still earlier bishops. Catholics and some Anglicans trace this authority back to the apostles themselves. Presbyterians believe church authority is not carried in individuals

this way; rather, church leaders can declare the will of God only on the authority of Scripture. But why restrict yourself to present-day friends? Why not also ask radiant Christians from previous centuries to offer up their intercessions on your behalf? This is perhaps the most positive way to think of praying to the saints. Yet there is a problem here. Asking Saint Joan to pray for you becomes praying to Saint Joan. But praying is an act of worship and devotion, and this can be offered only to God. Mortal and venial sins In Roman Catholic thinking when you die you are carrying the guilt of all the sins you have committed since your last confession. If your sins are venial relatively slight , you will now work them off in purgatory. A mortal sin, in contrast, cannot be resolved in purgatory; an unconfessed mortal sin means you are damned to hell. Presbyterians do not believe that sins can be graded this way. Confession and assurance of pardon are not what enables God to forgive us, but rather what enables us to recognize or feel or experience that we are forgiven. Beliefs about the Bible: Yes to authority, No to inerrancy Presbyterians have always had a very strong doctrine of biblical authority, but historically most have shied away from calling that doctrine inerrancy. Inerrancy is a word that points to complete factual accuracy. It is easy to assume this must be the right word to describe Scripture since it is the Word of God and therefore must not have any mistakes in it. But this reasoning does not quite work, for a couple of reasons: While you can apply the idea of inerrancy to a history quiz, it is hard to see how to apply it to a work of art. An inerrant quiz paper is one in which all the answers are factually accurate. What do you think when you look at that painting? The poems, songs, parables and sagas of the Bible are literary masterpieces. For example, the Parable of the Good Samaritan: Jesus made up this brief yet poignant story to answer the objection of the lawyer who asked about eternal life. Defending the inerrancy of this story misses the point. The point is to obey the authority of the story. Believing in the inerrancy of Scripture commits us to the factual accuracy of individual texts, while believing in the authority of Scripture presses us to know the message of Scripture as a whole. In order to be inerrant, the factuality of a statement has to be able to stand on its own: Contrast this with Psalm If the term inerrancy can be applied to these statements, then they can stand on their own, and we can believe with confidence that they are the truth. Does the Lord heal all of our diseases? Was Jesus sent only to the lost sheep of Israel? Will all liars be cast into the lake of fire? The doctrine of authority, in contrast, focuses on the whole Bible, rather than particular texts. How do they fit together to form one cohesive Biblical teaching? And how do I follow that teaching and live it out in my life?

**Chapter 5 : History and Beliefs of the Presbyterian Church – Faith Presbyterian Church Sun City, Arizona**

*Trinity Presbyterian Church is proudly and purposefully affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (USA). The PC(USA) is part of the Reformed tradition. The word "Reformed" refers to a specific kind of theology from the Historical Reformation.*

How do Presbyterians decide what they believe? Presbyterians believe that each person is called to work out his or her beliefs based on two primary sources of authority – first, the Scriptures and second, the historic creeds and confessions of the church. Presbyterians emphasize education and study of Scripture and creeds, seeking guidance of the Holy Spirit. Scripture From the earliest times, Presbyterians have affirmed that the Bible is the most authoritative source for faith and practice, and a source of the creative and redemptive power of God. Presbyterians have always affirmed that these declarations of belief must reflect the truths found in the Bible. What do Presbyterians believe? The majority of beliefs held by Christians are the same from one denomination to another. Presbyterian beliefs about things like God, Jesus Christ, grace, and love are very similar to those held by other Protestants. To explore the biblical and theological foundations of the Presbyterian faith, check out this series of articles. There are subtleties that set Presbyterians apart, and one of them is the belief in predestination. But it may not be what you think! Predestination is not the belief that everything we do in life has been pre-ordained, nor does it mean that some are chosen for heaven and others for hell. Predestination is the belief that God has given us salvation even before we are born. There is nothing we can do to gain it or to lose it. Like our birth, it is simply a gift. How do Presbyterian beliefs play out at WPC? We serve at WPC. We hope you worship with us because you believe this is the place you can best serve others with the love of God. Just as Christ came not to be served but to serve, we at WPC exist to serve. We serve each other, but we also serve our community and the world. We want grow with you as a follower of Christ and nurture your faith. We do this together through worship, education, mission, and fellowship. We are all ministers of Christ, helping each other live in response to God choosing us, loving us, and blessing us with amazing grace.

**Chapter 6 : Beliefs | Westminster Presbyterian Church**

*We believe marriage is a gift of God given to all humankind for the wellbeing of the entire human family. Our denomination, the Presbyterian Church (USA), makes room for a variety of beliefs regarding marriage between two people of the same sex and the ordination of LGBTQ members to the office of elder and pastor.*

Calendar our beliefs All Scripture is self-attesting and being Truth, requires our unreserved submission in all areas of life. The Bible, uniquely and fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, is the supreme and final authority on all matters on which it speaks. On this sure foundation we affirm these Essentials: We believe in one God, the sovereign Creator and Sustainer of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. To Him be all honor, glory and praise forever! Jesus Christ, the living Word, became flesh through His miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit and His virgin birth. He who is true God became true man united in one Person forever. He died on the cross a sacrifice for our sins according to the Scriptures. On the third day He arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven, where, at the right hand of the Majesty on High, He now is our High Priest and Mediator. The Holy Spirit has come to glorify Christ and to apply the saving work of Christ to our hearts. He convicts us of sin and draws us to the Savior. Indwelling our hearts, He gives new life to us, empowers and imparts gifts to us for service. He instructs and guides us into all truth, and seals us for the day of redemption. God credits His righteousness to those who put their faith in Christ alone for their salvation, thereby justifies them in His sight. Only such as are born of the Holy Spirit and receive Jesus Christ become children of God and heirs of eternal life. The true Church is composed of all persons who through saving faith in Jesus Christ and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit are united together in the body of Christ. The Church finds her visible, yet imperfect, expression in local congregations where the Word of God is preached in its purity and the sacraments are administered in their integrity; where scriptural discipline is practiced, and where loving fellowship is maintained. For her perfecting, she awaits the return of her Lord. Jesus Christ will come again to the earthâ€”personally, visibly, and bodilyâ€”to judge the living and the dead, and to consummate history and the eternal plan of God. The Lord Jesus Christ commands all believers to proclaim the Gospel throughout the world and to make disciples of all nations. Beliefs are often best discussed through dialogue; our pastor would love to discuss with you the beliefs of First Presbyterian Church of Redding in more detail.

**Chapter 7 : Our Beliefs - Grace Presbyterian Church**

*Our Presbyterian Belief [Felix B. Gear] on calendrierdelascience.com \*FREE\* shipping on qualifying offers. Book by Gear, Felix B.*

Scotland[ edit ] John Knox “, a Scot who had spent time studying under Calvin in Geneva, returned to Scotland and urged his countrymen to reform the Church in line with Calvinist doctrines. After a period of religious convulsion and political conflict culminating in a victory for the Protestant party at the Siege of Leith the authority of the Catholic Church was abolished in favour of Reformation by the legislation of the Scottish Reformation Parliament in . The Church was eventually organised by Andrew Melville along Presbyterian lines to become the national Church of Scotland. What resulted was an armed insurrection, with many Scots signing the Solemn League and Covenant. The Covenanters would serve as the government of Scotland for nearly a decade, and would also send military support to the Parliamentarians during the English Civil War. Following the restoration of the monarchy in , Charles II , despite the initial support that he received from the Covenanters, reinstated an episcopal form of government on the church. Covenanters in a Glen. However, legislation by the United Kingdom parliament allowing patronage led to splits in the Church. In , a group of ministers seceded from the Church of Scotland to form the Associate Presbytery, another group seceded in to form the Relief Church and the Disruption of led to the formation of the Free Church of Scotland. Further splits took place, especially over theological issues, but most Presbyterians in Scotland were reunited by union of the established Church of Scotland and the United Free Church of Scotland. Within Scotland the term kirk is usually used to refer to a local Presbyterian church. Some of the values and ideals espoused in Scottish Presbyterian denominations can be reflected in this reference in a book from Norman Drummond, chaplain to the Queen in Scotland. English Presbyterianism In England, Presbyterianism was established in secret in Thomas Cartwright is thought to be the first Presbyterian in England. Between and , a series of ordinances of the Long Parliament established Presbyterianism as the polity of the Church of England. Presbyterian government was established in London and Lancashire and in a few other places in England, although Presbyterian hostility to the execution of Charles I and the establishment of the republican Commonwealth of England meant that Parliament never enforced the Presbyterian system in England. The re-establishment of the monarchy in brought the return of Episcopal church government in England and in Scotland for a short time ; but the Presbyterian church in England continued in Non-Conformity, outside of the established church. Thomas Bradbury published several sermons bearing on the controversy, and in , "An answer to the reproaches cast on the dissenting ministers who subscribed their belief of the Eternal Trinity. By the 18th century many English Presbyterian congregations had become Unitarian in doctrine. A number of new Presbyterian Churches were founded by Scottish immigrants to England in the 19th century and later. Wales[ edit ] In Wales , Presbyterianism is represented by the Presbyterian Church of Wales , which was originally composed largely of Calvinistic Methodists who accepted Calvinist theology rather than the Arminianism of the Wesleyan Methodists. They broke off from the Church of England in , ordaining their own ministers. They were originally known as the Calvinist Methodist connexion and in the s it became alternatively known as the Presbyterian Church of Wales. Ireland[ edit ] Presbyterianism is the largest Protestant denomination in Northern Ireland and the second largest on the island of Ireland after the Anglican Church of Ireland ,[ citation needed ] and was brought by Scottish plantation settlers to Ulster who had been strongly encouraged to emigrate by James VI of Scotland, later James I of Ireland and England. An estimated , Scottish Presbyterians moved to the northern counties of Ireland between and the Battle of the Boyne in . Presbyterians, along with Roman Catholics in Ulster and the rest of Ireland, suffered under the discriminatory Penal Laws until they were revoked in the early 19th century. The Scots Kirk , which is English-speaking, and is attended by many nationalities. It maintains close links with the Church of Scotland in Scotland itself, as well as with the Reformed Church of France. The church was founded in the 12th century, and centuries later, after the Protestant Reformation, it adhered to Calvinist theology and became the Italian branch of the Presbyterian churches. As such, the church is a member of the World Communion of Reformed Churches. List of

Presbyterian churches in North America Evolution of Presbyterianism in the United States Even before Presbyterianism spread with immigrants abroad from Scotland, there were divisions in the larger Presbyterian family. Some later rejoined only to separate again. The Church was organized by the Rev.

Chapter 8 : Presbyterian Mission Agency What Presbyterians Don't Believe | Presbyterian Mission Agency

*calendrierdelascience.com believe in two sacraments: baptism and communion. Most Presbyterian churches only hold two sacraments: baptism and the Lord's Supper. They believe God instituted these two sacraments and that they are a sign of the power of Christ.*

Our Beliefs So what do Presbyterians believe? The only requirement for membership is affirming this belief. We also believe the following: God We believe that God, while in three persons, is one. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are of the same substance, continually unified in perfect community. We believe that this Trinitarian God creates, redeems and sustains us. Unique among Presbyterian belief is an emphasis on the sovereignty of God. That means we believe God is more powerful than anything and is the creative source of all things. Jesus Christ Presbyterians believe God loved humankind enough to come to earth in the person of Jesus fully human and fully divine. Jesus was born, lived an exemplary life, died and rose from the dead for us and for our salvation. The Holy Spirit is the presence of God in the world and in the believer. The Human Condition We believe that God created the world good. In following our own will, rather than that of God, we not only move out of right relationship with God, but also diminish our relationships with one another. Our choices leave us and our relationships broken and in need of healing. Grace God grants the gift of grace unmerited favor , which enables us to gain the faith necessary for salvation. We are saved by grace rather than by good deeds, correct beliefs, or human ceremonies. It is not possible to earn salvation it can only be accepted with thanksgiving and joy. Scripture Presbyterians believe that God speaks to us through biblical scripture, the authoritative word of God. We believe that all scripture is inspired by God. Services focus on God: Coming before our Lord with praises and confession; Hearing the word of God both read and proclaimed or preached ; Responding to the word with song, prayer and offerings; And carrying the word of God out into the world. We recognize two sacraments: Both were instituted by God and commanded by Jesus during his time on earth. All are welcome at the table, you do not have to be Presbyterian, or a member of Grace. We do offer Gluten-Free for those who are gluten intolerant.

## Chapter 9 : Presbyterians - 10 Things to Know About Their Beliefs & History

*Go On Mission. We go into the world to share the gospel as individuals in our circles of influence and as a body in Houston and beyond. We provide strategic opportunities locally and globally to share the Gospel and also equip the Body of Christ to share their faith in their daily lives.*

What is the Presbyterian Church, and what do Presbyterians believe? The polity of Presbyterian churches calls for local congregations to elect a board called the session or consistory. Congregations also elect presbyters who form a presbytery to govern regional groups of local churches. Presbyteries are then overseen by synods, and all the synods together form the General Assembly. Within the broad category of Presbyterianism, there are some churches that can be considered conservative or fundamental, and some that would be called liberal or progressive. Several smaller groups of Presbyterians have formed over the years and cover the spectrum of beliefs and practices. The Church of Scotland was affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church, even though it maintained an attitude of independence. John Knox was a priest in the Church of Scotland and was fed up with the abuses he saw in the Catholic leadership. Knox was exiled to England after his involvement in the murder of Cardinal Beaton in 1547. While in England, he was licensed to preach in the Church of England and was instrumental in reforming the Book of Common Prayer. When Mary Tudor ascended the English throne and started her bloody persecutions of Protestants, Knox fled to the Continent, where he met John Calvin and began to study Reformed theology. In 1559, Knox returned to Scotland and became a vocal proponent of Reformed theology and the concept of presbyterian leadership in the church. This confession ended papal rule in Scotland and outlawed the Mass. The Scottish Confession remained the primary doctrinal guide for the Church of Scotland until the Westminster Confession of Faith in 1646. By the early 1700s, these Scotsmen were ready to migrate to America because of the economic trials they faced in Ireland. The first presbytery in America was formed in 1706 in Philadelphia, and Presbyterianism spread rapidly in the Colonies. One distinctive of the Presbyterian Church has been their emphasis on education—Princeton University was founded as a Presbyterian school. In the Colonial period, the Presbyterian Church required advanced theological training for its ministers, whereas the Methodists and Baptists often allowed untrained men who were zealous for the gospel to carry on ministry. The result was fewer Presbyterian frontier preachers but more theologians and seminary teachers. Even today, more theologians come from Presbyterian or Reformed backgrounds than from other groups, and Presbyterian theologians have made significant contributions to issues concerning the church. Throughout the history of the Presbyterian Church, there have been splits and mergers based on theological and practical issues. The New Side supported the revivalists of the Great Awakening as instruments of the Holy Spirit, but the Old Side disdained their lack of traditional theological training and considered the whole revival to be simply a faddish movement. The split lasted from 1741 to 1758, when the two factions reached a formal agreement with each other and made peace. The New School taught a modified understanding of sin and holiness and downplayed the need for traditional presbyterian church polity. When the two groups merged again in 1801, it was with an increased tolerance for doctrinal diversity, and this led to greater changes in the early 20th century. Until the 1850s, Presbyterians held a leading role in the various debates over doctrinal integrity. Some of the key men supporting the Bible Conference movement were C. Scofield, James Brookes, William J. With doctrinal liberalism creeping into their seminaries, Presbyterians such as Louis Talbot, Lewis Sperry Chafer, and William Anderson helped start new Bible colleges. As Presbyterian conservatives saw the Presbyterian Church continue to tolerate doctrinal error, they led their churches to form new groups. In 1889, Princeton theologian J. Gresham Machen formed the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. In 1906, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church was formed as another conservative alternative for Presbyterians dismayed by the heretical leanings of the mainstream Presbyterian Church. While most Presbyterian churches will agree on general themes such as the depravity of man, the holiness of God, and salvation by faith, there is wide divergence in how they define and apply those themes. Some Presbyterian churches teach that the Bible is the verbally inspired, infallible Word of God, while others teach that it is a human book subject to error.