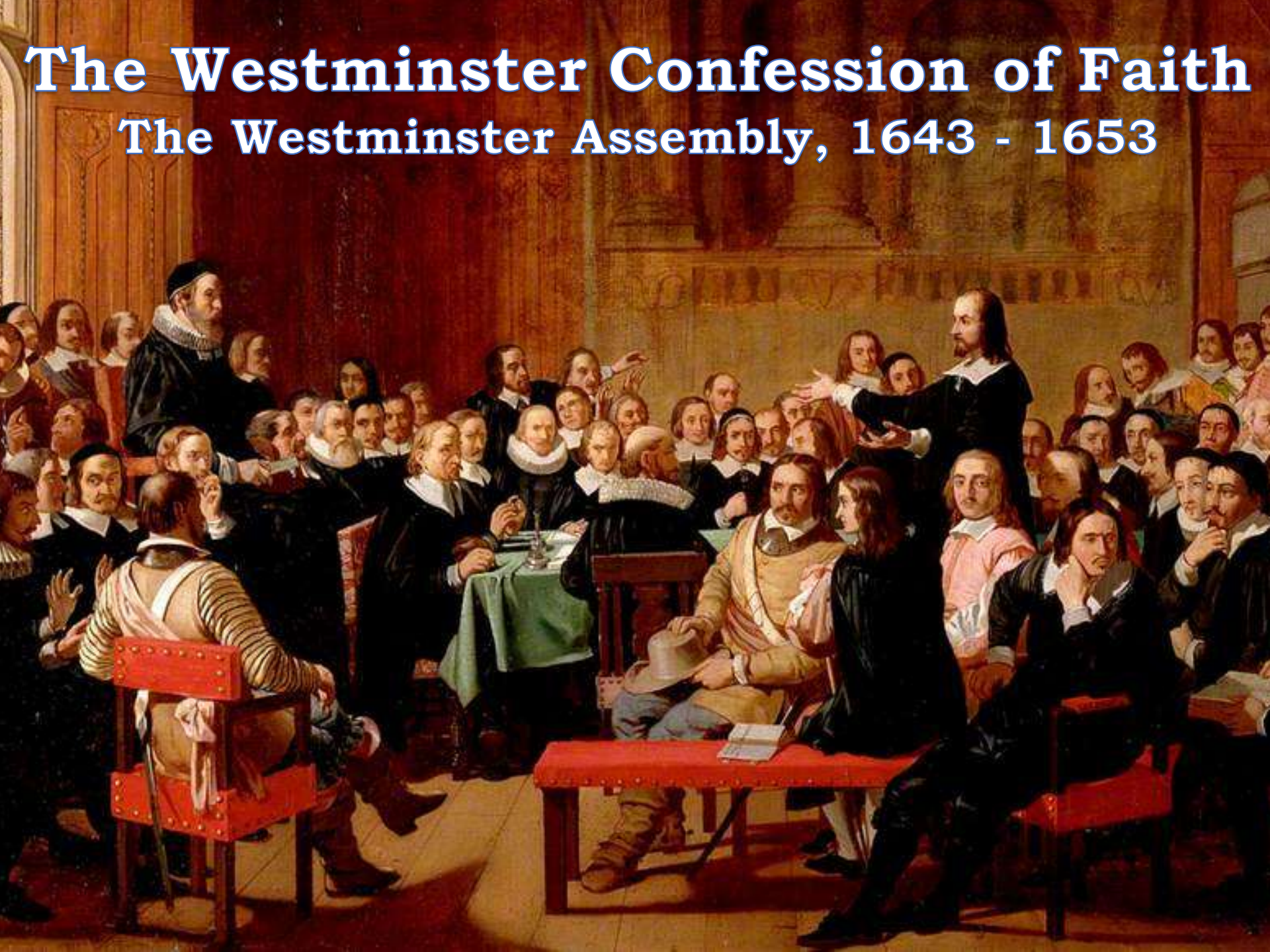


The Westminster Confession of Faith

The Westminster Assembly, 1643 - 1653



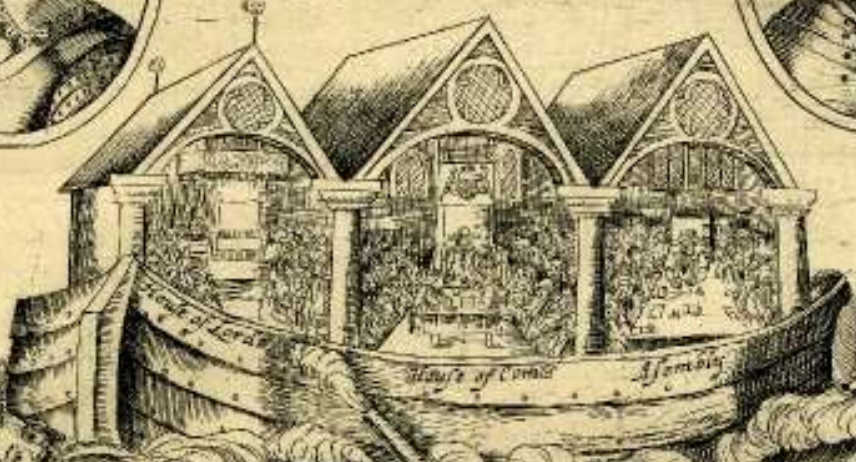
Historical Background

- King Charles I tried to rule as an absolute monarch.
- The King was head of the Church of England.
- Parliament opposed the king, leading to a civil war.
- Scotland agreed to support Parliament, if they would sign the Solemn League and Covenant, agreeing to reform the Church of England.
- C of E was “high church” and had 39 Articles and Book of Common Prayer, both of which were flawed in the eyes of Scots and Puritans.
- Parliament called for an assembly of 121 leading theologians to reform the church, its worship and doctrine, starting in 1643.

Englands Miraculous Preservation Emblematically Delcribed, Erected for a perpetuall MONUMENT to Posterity.



*Though Englands Ark have furie storme indur'd
By Platts of feare and power of the sword
Yet to this day by Gods almighty hand
The Arke preserv'd and almost safe at land*



Documents Produced

- 3 Jan 1645: Directory for Public Worship, replaced the Book of Common Prayer
 - Middle-Ground Between Presbyterians and Congregationalists
- August 1646: Confession of Faith
- 1647: Adopted by the Church of Scotland without Revision
- April 1648: Scripture Proofs Published
- 20 June 1648: Parliament adopted a revised version of the Confession
- 1648: Larger and Shorter Catechisms adopted by the Church of Scotland

American Presbyterianism

- **The Adopting Act of 1729:** Westminster Confession was adopted by American Presbyterian Synod, except for one section, which was excluded:
- Chap. 23, sec. 3. "The civil magistrate may not assume to himself the administration of the word and sacraments, or the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven; yet he hath authority, and it is his duty, to take order that unity and peace be preserved in the Church; that the truth of God be kept pure and entire; that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed, all corruptions and abuses in worship and discipline prevented or reformed, and all ordinances of God duly settled, administered, and observed. for the better effecting whereof he hath power to call Synods, to be present at them, and to provide that whatsoever is transacted in them be according to the mind of God."

Westminster Confession

1. Of the Holy Scripture
2. Of God, and of the Holy Trinity
3. Of God's Eternal Decree
4. Of Creation
5. Of Providence
6. Of the Fall of Man, of Sin, and of the Punishment Thereof
7. Of God's Covenant with Man
8. Of Christ the Mediator
9. Of Free Will
10. Of Effectual Calling
11. Of Justification
12. Of Adoption
13. Of Sanctification
14. Of Saving Faith
15. Of Repentance unto Life
16. Of Good Works
17. Of the Perseverance of the Saints
18. Of the Assurance of Grace and Salvation
19. Of the Law of God
20. Of Christian Liberty, and Liberty of Conscience
21. Of Religious Worship, and the Sabbath Day
22. Of Lawful Oaths and Vows
23. Of the Civil Magistrate
24. Of Marriage and Divorce
25. Of the Church
26. Of the Communion of Saints
27. Of the Sacraments
28. Of Baptism
29. Of the Lord's Supper
30. Of Church Censures
31. Of Synods and Councils
32. Of the State of Men after Death, and of the Resurrection of the Dead
33. Of the Last Judgment

That's a LONG Statement of Faith

- Statements of Faith:

- Short
- Cover the Essentials
- Basis for Unity
- Agreed to but not discussed much beyond that
- Not the focus of the work of the church or organization

- Confession of Faith

- Longer
- More Comprehensive
- Not Required for Membership
- Agreed to and discussed
- Taught and forms the basis of doctrinal teaching in the church