

What happens to the appeal to scripture and tradition once scripture itself is seen to be tradition?

The appeal to scripture and tradition—at least on the usual Protestant understanding—is, in principle, the appeal to formally normative witness and merely substantially normative witness respectively. (This is so, at any rate, if “tradition” is understood in its eulogistic sense, as distinct from its merely descriptive, noneulogistic sense.) But, then, if scripture itself is seen to be tradition, i.e., merely substantially normative witness rather than formally normative witness, the appeal to scripture can no longer function as it usually was and still is understood to do.

The point, in any case, is to understand that the appeal to normative witness, not only merely substantially normative witness, but also formally normative witness, is entirely justified—indeed, indispensable. This is what I tried to say in the section on “The Validity of the Scriptural Principle” in *On Theology*: 57-62.

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