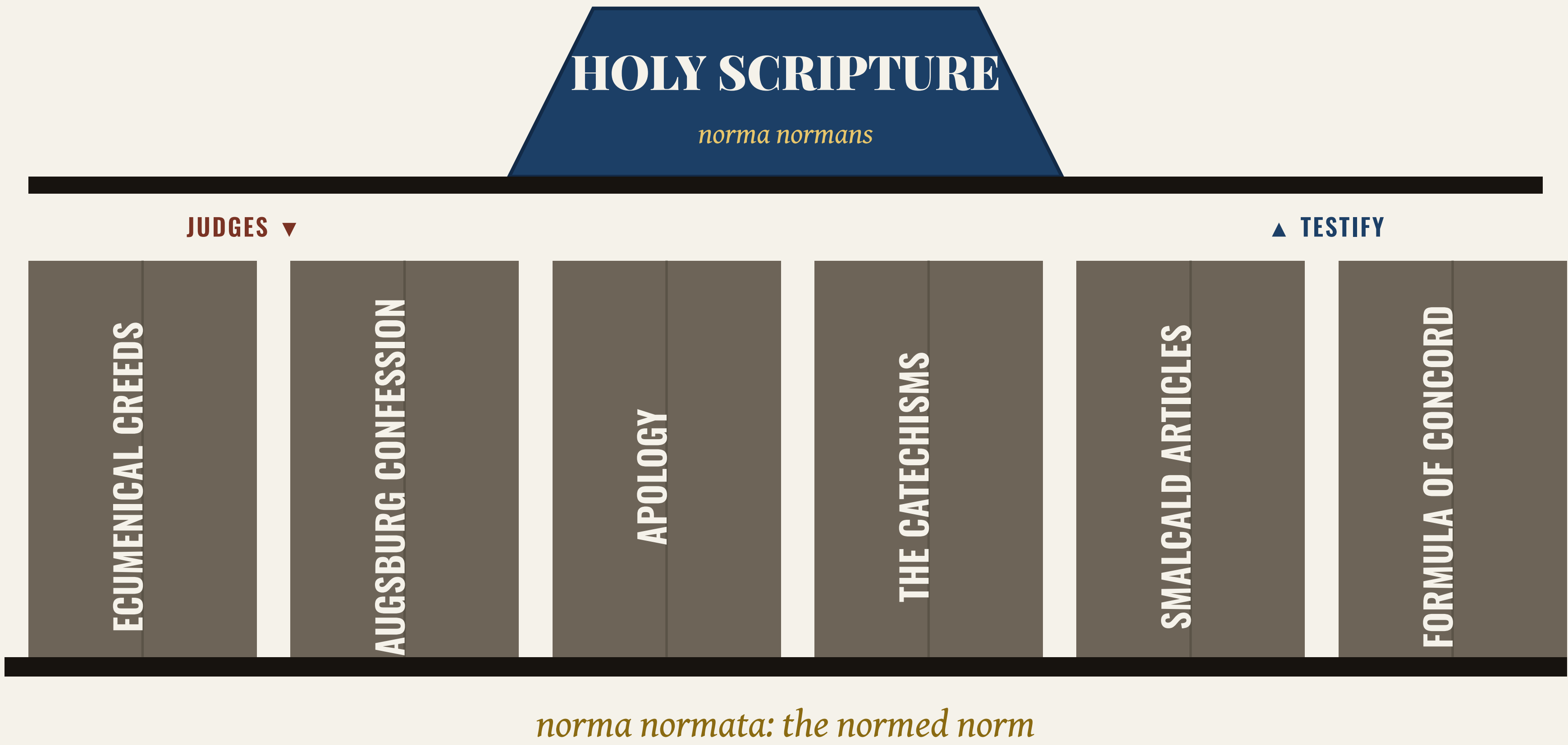


SOLA SCRIPTURA · SCRIPTURE ALONE

NORMA NORMANS

The Norm That Norms: Scripture Alone Judges All Doctrine



SCRIPTURE IS THE JUDGE. THE CONFESSIONS ARE FAITHFUL WITNESSES: NOT ON TRIAL, BUT NOT ON THE BENCH EITHER.

THE TWO NORMS

LATIN · THE NORMING NORM Norma Normans Holy Scripture. The standard by which every doctrine and every teacher is measured. It does not derive its authority from the Church; the Church derives her confession from it.	LATIN · THE NORMED NORM Norma Normata The Lutheran Confessions (the Creeds, the Augsburg Confession, the Catechisms) are a true and faithful witness to Scripture. They possess real authority, but their authority is derivative and always subject to scriptural correction.
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SOLE AUTHORITY, NOT MERELY HIGHEST

Rejected A hierarchy, with Scripture at the top and tradition, reason, and experience holding legitimate but subordinate seats beneath it. When they conflict with Scripture, the conflict is negotiated. Highest Authority	The Formula's Claim Scripture is the only norm. Every other authority carries no independent weight of its own. When they conflict with Scripture, there is no negotiation: Scripture decides. Sole Authority
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“The only rule and guiding principle.” The word **only** does the heavy lifting.

QUIA, NOT QUATENUS

Confessed “Because.” An unconditional, positive declaration: I subscribe to the Confessions because I have examined them and found their doctrine to be the pure teaching of the Word of God. Quia	Rejected “Insofar as.” A conditional, evasive pledge: I subscribe only to the extent I personally judge the Confessions to agree with Scripture. Theologian J. G. Walch’s verdict: with this restriction, one could comfortably subscribe to almost any book. Quatenus
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FORMULA OF CONCORD · EPITOME, “SUMMARY, RULE, AND NORM” §1

“We believe, teach, and confess that the only rule and guiding principle according to which all teachings and all teachers are to be evaluated and judged are the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments alone.”

FORMULA OF CONCORD · EPITOME §8

“[The Creeds and Confessions] are not judges, as are the Holy Scriptures, but only a testimony and declaration of the faith.”