

AN APPENDIX
TO A
CONFESSION OF FAITH

OR

A MORE FULL DECLARATION OF THE FAITH AND JUDGMENT OF
BAPTIZED BELIEVERS

OCCASIONED BY THE INQUIRY OF SOME WO-AFFECTED AND GODLY
PERSONS IN THE COUNTRY

BY Benjamin Cox

A PREACHER OF THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST

Published for the further clearing of Truth, and discovery of their mistake who have
imagined a dissent in fundamentals when there is none.

Matthew 10:27,.28

*What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that
preach ye upon the housetops. And fear not them which kill the body, but are not
able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body
in hell.*

LONDON, PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1646.

Copyright (Public Domain)

www.reformedontheweb.com/home/.html

(Reformed on the Web)

AN APPENDIX TO A CONFESSION OF FAITH
DECLARATION
OF THE
FAITH AND JUDGMENT
OF
BAPTIZED BELIEVERS:

"Be ready always." saith the Apostle Peter, "to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear," 1 Pet. 3:15. It is therefore our duty in meekness and love to give an answer to those godly persons, which desire to be fully informed of our judgment concerning religion and the ways of our God: To those therefore that have expressed a desire to be so informed, I thus answer.

In a book lately reprinted, entitled, *A Confession of Faith of Several Congregations or Churches of Christ in London, etc.* is a plain and sincere expression of our judgment in the things therein spoken of, in 52 Articles: And if our judgment touching some particulars, wherein we seem, or are supposed, to dissent from some others, do not appear clearly enough in that confession, I hope that same shall somewhat more clearly appear in this ensuing Appendix.

I

We believe that the punishment due to Adam for his first rebellion, and due to all men for their sin in Adam, and for all their sins against the law, was not a lying of the whole person of man in the dust, or grave, eternally without life or sense; for then the punishment of man that sinned, should not have differed from the punishment to the brute beast that sinned not. But the punishment due to man, as aforesaid, was "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish," and that eternal: And consequently the redemption which we have by Christ from the curse of the law, is a redemption from eternal misery and torment: this we learn from these places of Scripture compared together, Rom.2: 8.9; Jude 7; Ga1. 3:13; Heb. 9:12.

II

We believe that the eternity of the punishment of the vessels of wrath, is an absolute eternity, knowing no end; as well as the eternity of the life of the

saints, Matt. 25:46. This we maintain against those that affirm that all men shall be saved at the last.

III

Although all the power of the creature to act be from the Creator, and there is a providence of God always extended to every creature, and to every action of the creature; yet we judge that the final corruption of the creature, and the sinfulness of the creature's action, is from the creature, and not from God: and that it is a great sin to say that God is the author of sin, Eccles. 7:29; Hab. 1:13; James 1:13,14,15: 1 Cor. 14:33; 1 John 2:16.

As touching that place which is here objected against us, viz., Amos 3:6, "Shall there be evil in a city, etc.." we conceive that it is either to be rendered according to the last translation in the margin, "Shall there be evil in a city, and shall not the Lord do somewhat?" or else that it is to be understood only of the evil of punishment, and not of the evil of sin.

IV

We teach that they only do, or can believe in Jesus Christ, to whom it is given to believe in Him by a special, gracious and powerful work of His Spirit: And that this is (and shall be) given to the elect in the time appointed of God for their effectual calling; and to none but the elect, John 6:64,65; Phil. 1:29; Jer. 31:33,34; Ezek. 36:26; Rom. 8:29,30; John 10:26. This we hold against those that do maintain a freewill and sufficient ability in a man to believe; and do deny election.

V

We affirm, that as Jesus Christ never intended to give remission of sins and eternal life unto any but His sheep (John 10:15,17:2; Eph.5:25,26,27; Rev.5:9); so these sheep only have their sins washed away in the blood of Christ: The vessels of wrath, as they are none of Christ's sheep, nor ever believe in Him, so they have not the blood of Christ sprinkled upon them, neither are partakers of Him: And therefore have all their sins remaining upon them, and are not saved by Christ from any of them under any consideration whatsoever; but must lie under the intolerable burden of them eternally. The truth of this appears unto us by the light of these Scriptures compared together. Heb.12:24; 1 Pet. 1:2; Heb. 3:14; Matt. 7:23; Eph. 5:6; 1 Tim. 1:9; John 8:24.

VI

Though some of our opponents do affirm that by this doctrine we leave no Gospel to be preached to sinners for their conversion; yet through the goodness of God we know and preach to sinners this precious Gospel: "God so loved the world, (that is, has been so loving to mankind) that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life," John 3:16; and this faithful saying, worthy of all acceptation, "That Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." 1 Tim. 1:15, viz., all those sinners (how vile and grievous soever) not only which already do, but also which hereafter shall believe on Him to everlasting, 1 Tim. 1:16, and that "to Christ all the Prophets give witness, that through His name, whosoever believes in Him shall receive remission of sins," Acts 10:43. And this is called "The word of the Gospel." Acts 15:7. This is the Gospel which Christ and His Apostles preached, which we have received, and by which we have been converted, unto Christ. And we desire to mind what Paul saith in Gal. 1:9. "If any man preach any other Gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."

VII

Though we confess that no man doth attain unto faith by his own good will; John 1:13, yet we judge and know that the Spirit of God doth not compel a man to believe against his will, but doth powerfully and sweetly create in a man a new heart, and so make him to believe and obey willingly, Ezek. 36:26,27; Ps. 110:3. God thus working in us both to will and to do, of His good pleasure, Phil. 2:13.

VIII

Though all our workings for life be in vain, irregular, and not accepted of God, (Jesus Christ being our life, who is freely given to us of God) yet we believe and know that being made partakers of Jesus Christ, we do, and shall, and must, through Him, and walking in Him, bring forth the fruit of good works, serving God (in true obedience, and love, and thankfulness unto Him) in holiness and righteousness, being "His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which He hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. 2:10; Luke 1:74,75.

IX

Though we that believe in Christ, be not under the law, but under grace, Rom.6:14; yet we know that we are not lawless, or left to live without a rule; "not without law to God, but under law to Christ," 1 Cor. 9:21. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is a law, or commanding rule unto us; whereby, and in obedience whereunto, we are taught to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, Titus 2:11,12; the directions of Christ in His evangelical word guiding us unto, and in this sober, righteous, and godly walking, 1 Tim. 1:10, 11.

X

Though we be not now sent to the law as it was in the hand of Moses, to be commanded thereby, yet Christ in His Gospel teacheth and commandeth us to walk in the same way of righteousness and holiness that God by Moses did command the Israelites to walk in, all the commandments of the Second Table being still delivered unto us by Christ, and all the commandments of the First Table also (as touching the life and spirit of them) in this epitome or brief sum, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, etc.," Matt. 22:37,38,39,40; Rom. 13:8,9,10.

XI

Though no sin be imputed to those that believe in Christ, nor any sins do totally or fully reign over them, or in them, yet in them "the flesh lusteth against the spirit," Gal. 5:17; and "in many things they all offend," James 3:2, where the Apostle speaks of offenses that one believer may take notice of in another. Thus "there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." Eccles. 7:20, and "if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," 1 John 1:8.

XII

Though there be no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, yet they are taught, and that effectually, to be ashamed of their sins. Rom.6:21, and to be sorry for them after a godly sort, 2 Cor. 7:9,10,11. Yea to loath themselves for them, Ezek. 36:31. Because that sin is an evil and a filthy thing, and in its own nature tends to the provoking and dishonouring of God, being disobedience against God, and a thing which the most holy God declares Himself to loath and abhor; so that nothing but the blood of Christ could

purge us from our sins, and reconcile us to God, whom by sin we had offended. Therefore the saints both are, and must be grieved, and must judge them selves, because they have sinned against their holy and glorious God, and merciful and loving Father, 1 Cor.11:31

XIII

Though nothing be hid from God, and God imputeth not iniquity to any believer, yet ought we to confess our sins unto God, and to beseech Him to deal with us according to His own promise; viz.. to be still gracious and merciful unto us though we have sinned against Him, not being wroth with us, nor rebuking us, nor ceasing to do good unto us because we have sinned, Isa. 54:9; Heb. 8:12; Dan. 9:18,19,20; Ps. 32:5, 25:7; Ezek. 36:37; James 5:1. Thus according to Christ's direction, we pray unto God to forgive us our sins, Luke 11:4; yet still we are to look upon God as our Father, Luke 11:2; and consequently upon ourselves as His children; and so not short of justification, or under wrath, but washed in Christ's blood from all our sins. In such confession and petitions we show obedience to God, and do also exercise faith towards God, and repentance or godly sorrow for sin by which we see and confess that we for our parts have deserved wrath.

XIV

Though they which are once really engrafted into Christ shall certainly "be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation," 1 Pet. 1:5; yet ought they to "beware,lest being led away with the error of the wicked they fall from their own steadfastness." 2 Pet. 3:17. They ought therefore to seek continual support from God. Yea they ought to seek at God's hand (in prayer, and in the right use and study of His Word, and in the right use of His ordinances) not only continuance, but also growth in grace, 2 Pet. 3:18. First, because this is God's command. Secondly, because God who will establish them, will do it in this way; viz.. giving them grace to be obedient to this His command, and blessing them in this obedience.

XV

As we mind that our whole salvation is given unto us of the Father by Jesus Christ, and for His sake; so we likewise mind, that the Father's giving Jesus Christ for us, and to us, and so saving us in Him, and for His sake, is the acting and manifesting of that free love of His towards us, which was in Himself from all eternity. John 17:23; Eph. 1:4,5.

XVI

Although a true believer, whether baptized, or unbaptized, be in the state of salvation, and shall certainly be saved: Yet in obedience to the command of Christ every believer ought to desire baptism, and to yield himself to be baptized according to the rule of Christ in His word: And where this obedience is in faith performed, there Christ makes this His ordinance a means of unspeakable benefit to the believing soul, Acts 2:38. 22:16; Rom. 6:3,4; 1 Pet. 3:21. And a true believer that here sees the command of Christ lying upon him, cannot allow himself in disobedience thereunto, Acts 24:16.

XVII

Believers baptized ought to agree and join together in a constant profession of the same doctrine of the Gospel, and in professed obedience thereunto, and also in fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. Acts 2:42. And a company of baptized believers so agreeing and joining together, are a church or congregation of Christ. Acts 2:47.

XVIII

As the preaching of the Gospel, both for the conversion of sinners, and the edifying of those that are converted; so also the right use of baptism, and of the Lord's Supper, ought to be till the end of the world, Matt. 28:19,20; 1 Cor. 11:26.

XIX

A disciple gifted and enabled by the Spirit of Christ to preach the Gospel, and stirred up to this service by the same Spirit, bringing home to his soul the command of Christ in His word for the doing of this work, is a man authorized and sent by Christ to preach the Gospel, see Luke 19:12, etc., Mark 16:15, and Matt. 28:19 compared with Acts 8:4, Phil. 1:14,15; John 17; 20. And those gifted disciples which thus preach Jesus Christ who came in the flesh, are to be looked upon as men sent and given of the Lord. 1 John 4:2; Rom. 10:15; Eph. 4:11,12,13. And they which are converted from unbelief and false worship, and so brought into church fellowship by such preachers according to the will of Christ, are a seal of their ministry, 1 Cor. 9:2. And such preachers of the Gospel may not only lawfully administer baptism unto believers, and guide the action of the church in the use of the Supper, (Matt. 28:19; Acts 8:5-12; 1 Cor. 10:16) but may also call upon the

churches, and advise them to choose fit men for officers, and may settle such officers so chosen by a church, in the places or offices (of elder or deacon) to which they are chosen by imposition of hands and prayer. Acts 6:3- 6; 14:23; Titus 1:5.

XX

Though a believer's right to the use of the Lord's Supper doth immediately flow fro Jesus Christ apprehended and received by faith, yet in as much as all things ought to be done not only decently, but also in order, 1 Cor. 14:40; and the Word holds forth this order, that disciples should be baptized, Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:38, and then be taught to observe all things (that is to say. all other things) that Christ commanded the Apostles, Matt. 28:20, and accordingly the Apostles first baptized disciples, and then admitted them to the use of the Supper, Acts 2:41, 42; we therefore do not admit any in the use of the Supper, nor communicate with any in the use of this ordinance, but disciples having once been Scripturally baptized, less we should have fellowship with them in their doing contrary to order.

XXI

Although we know that in some things we are yet very dark, and in all things as yet we know but in part, and do therefore wait upon God for further light, yet we believe that we ought in our practice to obey, and serve, and glorify God in the use of that light which He hath given us; and not neglect the good using of that light which God hath already given us, under pretense of waiting for more, 1 Cor. 13:9; Acts 18:25.

XXII

As Christ doth not teach, nor allow that we should be without natural affection, or unsociable (see Rom. 1:31); so our being made partakers of Christ, doth not discharge us from the duties of our relations. Believing servants must perform the duties of servants toward their masters though unbelieving, 1 Tim. 6:1. So believing children must perform the duties of children toward their parents, Col. 3:20; believing wives, the duties of wives toward their husbands, 1 Pet. 3:1; and believing subjects must be subject to principalities and powers, and obey magistrates. Rom. 13:1. etc.; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:13,14,15. But still they must remember that their fear toward God must not be taught by the precept of men, Isa. 29:13; that these ought to obey God rather than men, Acts 5:29; and that the submission that must be given to

men, must be given to them for the Lord's sake. 1 Pet.2:14. Thus I conclude with the Apostle's words (in 2 Tim. 2:7) a little varied, but not misapplied. "Consider what we teach: and the Lord give you understanding in all things."

FINIS