

EARLY ENGLISH
BAPTIST
ASSOCIATIONAL CONFESSIONS

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JOHN SPILSBURY AND HIS CONFESSION

The personal confession of ten articles Spilsbury submitted for the "Godly reader to judge, what difference there is between him and me, in the main, that men should be so incensed against me, as to seek my life, as some have done." Spilsbury wanted to disarm those who cast "reproachful clamors... upon all without exception, that seem to be of my judgment about baptism" by declaring "a word of my faith, what I believe and hold to be truth, and desire to practice the same." One year later, Spilsbury would join with the other Particular Baptist churches in London in publishing and signing the First London Confession.

1. I do believe that there is only one God, who is distinguished in 3 persons; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; yet but one in nature, or essence, without divisions, and incommunicable, who made the world, and all things therein, by the word of his power, & governs them by his wise providence.

2. I believe that God made man in his own Image, an upright and perfect creature, consisting of soul and body: which body God framed of the earth, and breathed into the same the breath of life, and man became a living soul. To whom God gave a law, upon his keeping of which depends all his happiness, and upon the contrary attended his misery, which took effect; for he breaking that law, he fell under the curse, and wrath of God lay upon him and all his posterity. By which fall man lost the knowledge of God, and utterly disabled himself of all ability ever to recover the same again.

3. I believe God out of the counsel of his will, did, before he made the world, elect and choose some certain number of his foreseen fallen creatures, and appointed them to eternal life in his Son, for the glory of his grace: which number so elected shall be saved, come to glory, & the rest left in sin to glorify his justice.

4. I believe that God in the fullness of his own time, did send his son, the 2d. person, who in the womb of the virgin Mary, assumed mans nature, and in the same he suffered death upon the cross, only as he was man, to satisfy his Fathers justice, for the sins of his elect, & that he lay 3 days and 3 nights in his grave, from whence he arose the third day by the power of his Godhead, for the justification of all for whose sins he died, and that in the same body Christ died, he arose from the death, and afterwards ascended into heaven,

the place of glory, where he was before, and there to remain until he comes at the last day to judge the world in righteousness.

5. I believe that God of his grace, in his own time, effectually calls such as shall be saved to the knowledge of the truth, who is said, of his own will to beget us by the word of truth: in which work of grace, nature is as passive, as a child in the parents begetting of it; and so God by His Spirit works faith in the hearts of all such to believe in Christ, and his righteousness, only for justification. And thus they are made righteous before God in Christ, and so conformable to the will of God the Father through the Son; and also made holy through the work of regeneration, and the holy Spirit of grace dwelling in them; yet all such have still, as long as they live here in the flesh, remaining in them, an old man, that original corruption, the flesh that wars against the spirit, which hinders them in their obedience both to God and to man, and many times draws them to that which is evil, and contrary to their intentions; yet all of them shall through Christ overcome, and safely be brought to glory at last.

6. I believe the holy Scriptures to be the word of God, and have the only authority to bind the conscience to the obedience of all therein contained, and are the all sufficient rule, by the Spirit of God to guide a man in all his obedience both to God and man.

7. As for the absence of original sin, and power in the will to receive and refuse grace and salvation being generally offered by the Gospel, and Christ dying for all persons universally, to take away sin that stood between them and salvation, and so laid down his life for a ransom for all without exception, and for such as have been one in God's love, so as approved of by him in Christ for salvation, and in the Covenant of Grace, and for such to fall so as to be damned eternally, and all of the like nature, I do believe is a doctrine from beneath, and not from above, and the teachers of it from Satan, and not from God, and to be rejected as such that oppose Christ and his Gospel.

8. I do believe the resurrection of the dead, that all shall rise and come to judgment, and every one give account of himself to God, and receive according to the things done in their bodies, whether they be good or bad; therefore no conscience ought to be forced in the matters of Religion, because no man can bear out another in his account to God, if in case he

should cause him to sin.

9. I do believe the powers that are, as the civil Magistrates, and so, are of God, to whom God hath committed the Sword of justice, for the punishing of evil doers, and for the good of such as do well, in which respect they ought to be honored, obeyed, and assisted by all men, and of Christians especially, and that out of conscience to God, whose ordinance and ministers they are, and bear not the sword in vain, Rom. 13, I Pet. 2, Tit. 3.

And lastly, I do believe that there is an holy and blessed communion of Saints, that God of his grace calls such as belong to life by election, unto the fellowship of his Son by the Gospel, of which matter, God by his word and Spirit joins them together in his Covenant of grace, and so constitutes his Church, as I have before showed: And as God hath thus built for himself an holy habitation of such pure matter, and also after so holy a manner, even so hath he provided a way of preservation and safety for the same; as Isa. 26:1. We have a strong City, salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks: which City is said to have a wall both great and high, and built upon twelve foundations; great, that none shall break through, and high, that none shall overtop or get over, and strong in the foundation, that nothing shall shake it, and God hath said, that he will be a wall of fire round about, and the glory in the midst of it, and that he will keep it, and watch over it by night and by day, that nothing shall hurt it; and as God hath built himself a house after his own mind, and is a guard to the same; even so he is also said to beautify the same with salvation, and to make the place of his feet glorious, and that he will lay all her stones with fair colors, and her foundations with Sapphires, and her windows of Agars, and her gates of Carbuncles, and all her borders of pleasant stones, and all her children taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of her children. And as Christ does thus signify unto us the nature of his church both in respect of her matter, her form, her grace, and comely order in him her head; even so he holds forth his love to her, and delight in her, by these and the like expressions of comfort and solace. The Lord hath chosen Zion, &c. Pas. 132.13,14; Eph. 2:21,23. Pas. 87.2,3; Gal. 4:26,31. Isa. 2.2; Isa. 62. 1,12, Ezek. 48:35. Rev. 21. 12,14, Zech. 2.5, Isa. 26.3, Isa. 4. 11,12,13. Rev. 21. 11,18,21, Cant. 4.7, Psal. 45.13.

LONDON BAPTIST CONFESSION OF 1644

A CONFESSION OF FAITH of seven congregations or churches of Christ in London, which are commonly, but unjustly, called Anabaptists; published for the vindication of the truth and information of the ignorant; likewise for the taking off those aspersions which are frequently, both in pulpit and print, unjustly cast upon them. Printed in London, Anno 1646.

But this I confesse unto thee, that after the way which they call heresie so worship I the God of my Fathers, beleeving all things that are written in the Law and the Prophets, and have hope towards God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead both of the just and unjust. - Acts xxiv. 14, 15.

For we cannot but speak the things that we have seen and heard. - Acts iv. 20.

If I have spoken evill, bear witnesse of the evill; but if well, why smitest thou me? - John xviii. 23.

Blessed are yee when men revile you, and say all manner of evil against you falsly for my sake. Rejoice, etc. - Matth. v.11, 12. & xix. 29.

I.

That God as He is in Himself, cannot be comprehended of any but himself, (1) dwelling in that inaccessible light, that no eye can attain unto, whom never man saw, nor can see; that there is but (2) one God, one Christ, one Spirit, one Faith, one Baptism; (3) one rule of holiness and obedience for all Saints, at all times, in all places to be observed.

1) 1 Tim. 6:16

2) 1 Tim. 2:5; Eph. 4:4-6; 1 Cor. 12: 4-6,13; John 14

3) 1 Tim. 6:3,13,14; Gal. 1:8-9; 2 Tim. 3:15

II.

That God is (1) of Himself, that is, neither from another, nor of another, nor by another, nor for another: (2) But is a Spirit, who as his being is of Himself, so He gives (3) being, moving, and preservation to all other things, being in Himself eternal, most holy, every way infinite in (4) greatness, wisdom, power, justice, goodness, truth, etc. In this Godhead, there is the Father, the

Son, and the Spirit; being every one of them one and the same God; and therefore not divided, but distinguished one from another by their several properties; the(5) Father being from Himself, the(6) Son of the Father from everlasting, the(7) Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son.

- 1) Isa. 43:11; 46:9
- 2) John 4:24
- 3) Exod. 3:14
- 4) Rom. 11:36; Acts 17:28
- 5) 1 Cor. 8:6
- 6) Prov. 8:22-23
- 7) John 15:16; Gal. 4:6

III.

That God has(1) decreed in Himself from everlasting touching all things, effectually to work and dispose them(2) according to the counsel of His own will, to the glory of His name; in which decree appears His wisdom, constancy, truth, and faithfulness;(3) Wisdom is that whereby He contrives all things;(4) Constancy is that whereby the decree of God remains always immutable;(5) Truth is that whereby He declares that alone which He has decreed, and though His sayings may seem to sound sometimes another thing, yet the sense of them does always agree with the decree;(6) Faithfulness is that whereby He effects that He has decreed, as He has decreed. And touching His creature man,(7) God had in Christ before the foundation of the world, according to the good pleasure of His will, foreordained some men to eternal life through Jesus Christ, to the praise and glory of His grace,(8) leaving the rest in their sin to their just condemnation, to the praise of His justice.

- 1) Isa. 46:10
- 2) Eph. 1:11
- 3) Col. 2:3
- 4) Num. 23:19-20
- 5) Jer. 10:10; Rom. 3:4
- 6) Isa. 44:10
- 7) Eph. 1:3-7; 2 Tim. 1:9; Acts 13:48; Rom. 8:29-30
- 8) Jude 4,6; Rom. 9:11-13; Prov. 16:4

IV.

(1) In the beginning God made all things very good, created man after His own (2) image and likeness, filling him with all perfection of all natural excellency and uprightness, free from all sin. (3) But long he abode not in this honor, but by the (4) subtlety of the Serpent, which Satan used as his instrument, himself with his angels having sinned before and not (5) kept their first estate, but left their own habitation; first (6) Eve, then Adam being seduced did wittingly and willingly fall into disobedience and transgression of the Commandment of their great Creator, for the which death came upon all, and reigned over all, so that all since the Fall are conceived in sin, and brought forth in iniquity, and so by nature children of wrath, and servants of sin, subjects of (7) death, and all other calamities due to sin in this world and for ever, being considered in the state of nature, without relation to Christ.

- 1) Gen. 1; Col. 1:16; Heb. 11:3; Isa. 45:12
- 2) Gen. 1:26; 1 Cor. 15:45-46; Ecc. 7:31
- 3) Psa. 49:20
- 4) Gen. 3:1, 4, 5; 2 Cor. 11:3
- 5) 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6; John 8:44
- 6) Gen. 3:1, 2, 6; 1 Tim. 2:14; Ecc. 7:31; Gal. 3:32
- 7) Rom. 5:12, 18, 19; 6:23; Eph. 2:3

V.

All mankind being thus fallen, and become altogether dead in sins and trespasses, and subject to the eternal wrath of the great God by transgression; yet the elect, which God has (1) loved with an everlasting love, are (2) redeemed, quickened, and saved, not by themselves, neither by their own works, lest any man should boast himself, but wholly and only by God of (3) His free grace and mercy through Jesus Christ, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, that as it is written he that rejoices, let him rejoice in the Lord.

- 1) Jer. 31:2
- 2) Gen 3:15; Eph. 1:3, 7; 2:4, 9; 1 Thes. 5:9; Acts 13:38
- 3) 1 Cor. 5:21; Jer. 9:23, 24

VI.

(1) This therefore is life eternal, to know the only true God, and whom He has

sent Jesus Christ.(2) And on the contrary, the Lord will render vengeance in flaming fire to them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- 1) John 17:3; Heb. 5:9; Jer. 23:5, 6
- 2) 2 Thes. 1:8; John 3:36

VII.

The rule of this knowledge, faith, and obedience, concerning the worship and service of God, and all other Christian duties, is not mans inventions, opinions, devices, laws, constitutions, or traditions unwritten whatsoever, but only the word of God contained in the Canonical Scriptures.

John 5:39; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Col. 21:18, 23; Mat. 15:9

VIII.

In this written Word God has plainly revealed whatsoever He has thought needful for us to know, believe, and acknowledge, touching the nature and office of Christ, in whom all the promises are Yea and Amen to the praise of God.

Acts 3:22, 23; Heb. 1:1, 2; 2 Tim 3:15-17; 2 Cor. 1:20

IX.

Touching the Lord Jesus, of whom(1) Moses and the Prophets wrote, and whom the Apostles preached, is the(2) Son of God the Father, the brightness of His glory, the ingrave form of His being, God with Him and with His Holy Spirit, by whom He made the world, by whom He upholds and governs all the works He has made, who also(3) when the fullness of time was come was, was made man of a(4) woman, of the Tribe of(5) Judah, of the seed of Abraham and David, to wit, of Mary that blessed Virgin, by the Holy Spirit coming upon her, and the power of the most High overshadowing her, and was also in(6) all things like unto us, sin only excepted.

- 1) Gen. 3:15; 22:18; 49:10; Dan. 7:13; 9:24-26
- 2) Prov. 8:23; John 1:1-3; Col. 1:1, 15-17
- 3) Gal. 4:4
- 4) Heb. 7:14; Rev. 5:5 with Gen. 49:9-10
- 5) Rom. 1:3; 9:5; Mat. 1:16; Luke 3:23, 26; Heb. 2:16
- 6) Isa. 53:3-5; Phil. 2:8

X.

Touching His office,(1) Jesus Christ only is made the Mediator of the New Covenant, even the everlasting covenant of grace between God and man, to(2) be perfectly and fully the Prophet, Priest and King of the Church of God for evermore.

1) 2 Tim. 2:15; Heb. 9:15; John 14:6

2) Heb. 1:2; 3:1, 2; 7:24; Acts 5:31

XI.

Unto this office He was fore-ordained from everlasting, by the(1) authority of the Father, and in respect of His manhood, from the womb called and separated, and(2) anointed also most fully and abundantly with all gifts necessary, God having without measure poured the Spirit upon Him.

1) Prov. 8:23; Isa. 42:6; 49:1,5

2) Isa. 11:2-5; 61:1-3 with Luke 4:17, 22; John 1:14,16; 3:34

XII.

In this call the Scripture hold forth two special things considerable; first, the call to the office; secondly the office its self. First, that(1) none takes this honor but he that is called of God, as was Aaron, so also Christ, it being an action especially of God the Father, whereby a special covenant being made, He ordains His Son to this office: which Covenant is, that(2) Christ should be made a sacrifice for sin, that He shall see His seed, and prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand; which calling therefore contains in it self(3) choosing,(4) for-ordaining,(5) sending. choosing respects the end, foreordaining the means, sending the execution it self,(6) all of mere grace, without any condition fore-seen wither in men, on in Christ Himself.

1) Heb. 5:4-6

2) Isa. 53:10

3) Isa. 42:13

4) 1 Peter 1:20

5) John 3:17; 9:27; 10:36

6) John 8:32

XIII.

So that this office to be Mediator, that is, to be Prophet, Priest, and King of the Church of God, is so proper to Christ, as neither in the whole, not in any part thereof, it can be transferred from Him to any other.

1 Tim. 2:15; Heb. 7:24; Dan. 5:14; Acts 4:12; Luke 1:23; John 14:6

XIV.

This office it self to which Christ was called, is three fold, of(1) a Prophet, of(2) Priest, and of(3) King: this number and order of offices is showed; first by mens necessities grievously laboring(4) under ignorance, by reason whereof they stand in infinite necessity of the Prophetical office of Christ to relieve them. Secondly,(5) alienation from God, wherein they stand in need of the Priestly office to reconcile them. Thirdly, our(6) utter disability to return to Him, by which they stand in need of the power of Christ in His Kingly office to assist and govern them.

- 1) Deut. 18:15 with Acts 3:22-23
- 2) Psal. 110:3; Heb. 3:1; 4:14-15; 5:6
- 3) Psal. 2:6
- 4) Acts 26:18; Col. 1:3
- 5) Col. 1:21; Eph. 2:12
- 6) Song of Sol. 1:3; John 6:44

XV.

Touching the Prophecy of Christ, it is that whereby He has(1) perfectly revealed the whole will of God out of the bosom of the Father, that is needful for His servants to know, believe, and obey; and therefore is called not only a Prophet and a(2) Doctor, and the(3) Apostle of our profession, and the(4) Angel of the Covenant; but also the very(5) wisdom of God, and the(6) treasures of wisdom and understanding.

- 1) John 1:18; 12:49-50; 15; 17:8; Deut. 18:15
- 2) Mat. 23:10
- 3) Heb. 3:1
- 4) Mal. 3:1
- 5) 1 Cor. 1:24
- 6) Col. 2:3

XVI.

That He might be such a Prophet as thereby to every way complete, it was necessary that He should be(1) God, and withall also that He should be man; for unless He had been God, He could have never perfectly understood the will of God,(2) neither had He have been able to reveal it throughout all ages; and unless He had been man, He could not fitly have unfolded it in His(3) own person to man.

1) John 1:18; 3:13

2) 1 Cor. 2:11, 16

3) Acts 3:22 with Deut. 18:15; Heb. 1:1

XVII.

Touching His Priesthood, Christ(1) being consecrated, has appeared once to put away sin by the offering and sacrifice of Himself, and to this end has fully performed and suffered all those things by which God, through the blood of that His Cross in an acceptable sacrifice, might reconcile His elect only;(2) and having broken down the partition wall, and therewith finished and removed all the rites, shadows, and ceremonies, is now entered within the vail, into the Holy of Holiest, that is, to the very Heavens, and presence of God, where He for ever lives and sits at the right hand of Majesty, appearing before the face of His Father to make intercession for such as come to the Throne of Grace by that new and living way; and not that only, but(3) makes His people a spiritual House, an holy Priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifice acceptable to God through Him; neither does the Father accept, or Christ offer to the Father any other worship or worshipers.

1) John 17:19; Heb. 5:7-9; 9:26; Rom. 5:19; Eph. 5:12; Col. 1:20

2) Eph. 2:14-16; Rom. 8:34

3) 1 Peter 2:5; John 4:23, 24

XVIII.

This Priesthood was not legal, or temporary, but according to the order(1) of Melchisedec(2) not by a carnal commandment, but by the power of endless life;(3) not by an order that is weak and lame, but stable and perfect, not for a(4) time, but for ever, admitting no successor, but perpetual and proper to Christ, and of Him that ever lives. Christ Himself was the Priest, Sacrifice and Alter: He was(5) Priest, according to both natures, He was a sacrifice

most properly according to His human nature:(6) where in Scripture it is wont to be attributed to His body, to His blood; yet the chief force whereby this sacrifice was made effectual, did depend upon His(7) divine nature, namely, that the Son of God did offer Himself for us: He was the alter properly according to His divine nature, it belonging to the(8) Alter to sacrifice that which is offered upon it, and so it ought to be of greater dignity then the Sacrifice itself.

1) Heb. 7:17

2) Heb. 7:16

3) Heb. 7:18-21

4) Heb. 7:24-25

5) Heb. 5:6

6) Heb. 10:10; 1 Peter 1:18-19; Col. 1:20-21; Isa. 53: 10; Mat. 20:28

7) Acts 20:28; Rom. 8:3

8) Heb. 9:14; 13:10, 12, 15; Mat. 23:17; John 17:19

XIX.

Touching His Kingdom,(1) Christ being risen from the dead, ascended into Heaven, sat on the right hand of God the Father, having all power in Heaven and earth, given unto Him, He does spiritually govern His Church, exercising His power(2) over all angels and men, good and bad, to the preservation and salvation of the elect, to the over-ruling and destruction of His enemies, which are reprobates,(3) communicating and applying the benefits, virtue, and fruit of His Prophecy and Priesthood to His elect, namely, to the subduing and taking away of their sins, to their justification and adoption of Sons, regeneration, sanctification, preservation and strengthening in all their conflicts against Satan, the World, the Flesh, and the temptations of them, continually dwelling in, governing and keeping their hearts in faith and filial fear by His Spirit, which having(4) given it, He never takes it away from them, but by it still begets and nourishes in them faith, repentance, love, joy, hope, and all heavenly light in the soul unto immortality, notwithstanding through our own unbelief, and the temptations of Satan, the sensible sight of this light and love be clouded and overwhelmed for the time.(5) And on the contrary, ruling in the world over His enemies, Satan, and all the vessels of wrath, limiting, using, restraining them by His mighty power, as seems good in His divine wisdom and justice to the execution of His determinate counsel,

delivering them up to a reprobate mind, to be kept through their own deserts, in darkness and sensuality unto judgment.

1) 1 Cor. 15:4; 1 Peter 3:21-22; Mat. 28:18-20; Luke 24:51; Acts 1:11; 5:30-31; John 19:36; Rom. 14:17

2) Mark 1:27; Heb. 1:14; John 16:7,15

3) John 5:26-27; Rom. 5:5-7; 14:17; Gal. 5:22,23; John 1:4,13

4) John 13:1; 10:28-29; 14:16-17; Rom. 11:29; Psal. 51:10-11; Job 33:29-30; 2 Cor. 12:7, 9

5) Job 1, 2; Rom. 1:21; 2:4-6; 9:17-18; 2 Peter 2

XX.

This Kingdom shall be then fully perfected when He shall the second time come in glory to reign among His saints, and to be admired of all them which do believe, when He shall put down all rule and authority under His feet, that the glory of the Father may be full and perfectly manifested in His Son, and the glory of the Father and the Son in all His members.

1 Cor. 15:24,28; Heb. 9:28; 2 Thes. 1:9, 10; 1 Thes. 4:15-17; John 17:21,26

XXI.

That Christ Jesus by His death did bring fourth salvation and reconciliation only for the(1) elect, which were those which(2) God the Father gave Him; and that the Gospel which is to be preached to all men as the ground of faith, is, that(3) Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the ever blessed God, filled with the perfection of all heavenly and spiritual excellencies, and that salvation is only and alone to be had through the believing in His name.

1) John 15:13; Rom. 8:32-34; 5:11; 3:25

2) Job 17:2 with 6:37

3) Mat. 16:16; Luke 2:26; John 6:9; 7:3; 20:31; 1 John 5:11

XXII.

That faith is the(1) gift of God wrought in the hearts of the elect by the Spirit of God, whereby they come to see, know, and believe the truth of the(2) Scriptures, and not only so, but the excellency of them above all other writing and things in the world, as they hold forth the glory of God in His attributes, the excellency of Christ in His nature and offices, and the power of the fullness of the Spirit in His workings and operations; and thereupon are

enabled to cast the weight of their souls upon this truth thus believed.

1) Eph. 2:8; John 6:29; 4:10; Phil. 1:29; Gal. 5:22

2) John 17:17; Heb. 4:11-12; John 6:63

XXIII.

Those that have this precious faith wrought in them by the Spirit, can never finally nor totally fall away; and though many storms and floods do arise and beat against them, yet they shall never be able to take them off that foundation and rock which by faith they are fastened upon, but shall be kept by the power of God to salvation, where they shall enjoy their purchased possession, they being formerly engraven upon the palms of God's hands.

Mat. 7:24, 25; John 13:1; 1 Peter 1:4-6; Isa. 49:13-16

XXIV.

That faith is ordinarily(1) begot by the preaching of the Gospel, or word of Christ, without respect to(2) any power or capacity in the creature, but it is wholly(3) passive, being dead in sins and trespasses, does believe, and is converted by no less power,(4) then that which raised Christ from the dead.

1) Rom. 10:17; 1 Cor. 1:21

2) Rom. 9:16

3) Rom. 2:1, 2; Ezek. 16:6; Rom 3:12

4) Rom. 1:16; Eph. 1:19; Col 2:12

XXV.

That the tenders of the Gospel to the conversion of sinners,(1) is absolutely free, no way requiring, as absolutely necessary, any qualifications, preparations, terrors of the Law, or preceding ministry of the Law, but only and alone the naked soul, as a(2) sinner and ungodly to receive Christ, as Christ, as crucified, dead, and buried, and risen again, being made(3) a Prince and a Savior for such sinners.

1) John 3:14, 15; 1:12; Isa. 55:1; John 7:37

2) 1 Tim. 1:15; Rom. 4:5; 5:8

3) Acts 5:30-31; 2:36; 1 Cor. 1:22-24

XXVI.

That the same power that converts to faith in Christ, the same power carries on the(1) soul still through all duties, temptations, conflicts, sufferings, and

continually what ever a Christian is, he is by(2) grace, and by a constant renewed (3) operation from God, without which he cannot perform any duty to God, or undergo any temptations from Satan, the world, or men.

- 1) 1 Peter 1:5; 2 Cor. 12:9
- 2) 1 Cor. 15:10
- 3) Phil. 2:12, 13; John 15:5; Gal. 2:19-20

XXVII.

That God the Father, and Son, and Spirit, is one with(1) all believers, in their(2) fullness, in(3) relations,(4) as head and members,(5) as house and inhabitants, as(6) husband and wife, one with Him, as(7) light and love, and one with Him in His inheritance, and in all His(8) glory; and that all believers by virtue of this union and oneness with God, are the adopted sons of God, and heirs of Christ, co-heirs and joint heirs with Him of the inheritance of all the promises of this life, and that which is to come.

- 1) 1 Thes. 1:1; John 14:10, 20; 17:21
- 2) Col. 2:9, 10; 1:19; John 1:17
- 3) John 20:17; Heb. 2:11
- 4) Col. 1:18; Eph. 5:30
- 5) Eph. 2:22; 1Cor. 3:16-17
- 6) Isa. 16:5; 2 Cor. 11:3
- 7) Gal. 3:26
- 8) John 17:24

XXVIII.

That those which have union with Christ, are justified from all their sins, past,(1) present, and to come, by the blood of Christ; which justification we conceive to be a gracious and free(2) acquittance of a guilty, sinful creature, from all sin by God, through the satisfaction that Christ has made by His death; and this applied in the manifestation of it through faith.

- 1) John 1:7; Heb 10:14; 9:26; 2 Cor. 5:19; Rom. 3:23
- 2) Acts 13:38, 39; Rom. 5:1; 3:25, 30

XXIX.

That all believers are a holy and(1) sanctified people, and that sanctification is a spiritual grace of the(2) New Covenant, and effect of the(3) love of God, manifested to the soul, whereby the believer is in(4) truth and reality

separated, both in soul and body, from all sin and dead works, through the(5) blood of the everlasting Covenant, whereby he also presents after a heavenly and evangelical perfection, in obedience to all the commands,(6) which Christ as Head and King in this New Covenant has prescribed to him.

- 1) 1 Cor. 1:1; 1 Peter 2:9
- 2) Eph. 1:4
- 3) 1 John 4:16
- 4) Eph. 4:24
- 5) Phil. 3:15
- 6) Mat. 28:20

XXX.

All believers through the knowledge of(1) that justification of life given by the Father, and brought forth by the blood of Christ, have this as their great privilege of that New(2) Covenant, peace with God, and reconciliation, whereby they that were afar off, were brought nigh by(3) that blood, and have (as the Scripture speaks) peace(4) passing all understanding, yes, joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by(5) whom we have received the Atonement.

- 1) 2 Cor. 5:19
- 2) Isa. 54:10; 26:12
- 3) Eph. 2:13-14
- 4) Phil. 4:7
- 5) Rom. 5:10-11

XXXI.

That all believers in the time of this life, are in a continual warfare, combat, and opposition against sin, self, the world, and the Devil, and liable to all manner of afflictions, tribulations, and persecutions, and so shall continue until Christ comes in His Kingdom, being predestined and appointed there unto; and whatsoever the saints, any of them do possess or enjoy of God in this life, is only by faith.

Eph. 6:10-13; 2 Cor. 10:3; Rev. 2:9, 10

XXXII.

That the only strength by which the saints are enabled to encounter with all opposition, and to overcome all afflictions, temptations, persecutions, and trails, is only by Jesus Christ, who is the Captain of their salvation, being

made perfect through sufferings, who has engaged His strength to assist them in all their afflictions, and to uphold them under all their temptations, and to preserve them by His power to His everlasting Kingdom.

John 16:33; Heb. 2:9, 10; John 15:5

XXXIII.

That Christ has here on earth a spiritual Kingdom, which is the Church, which He has purchased and redeemed to Himself, as a particular inheritance: which Church, as it is visible to us, is a company of visible(1) saints,(2) called and separated from the world, by the Word and the(3) Spirit of God, to the visible profession of the faith of the Gospel, being baptized into the faith, and joined to the Lord, and each other, by mutual agreement, in the practical enjoyment of the(4) ordinances, commanded by Christ their head and King.

1) 1 Cor. 1:1; Eph. 1:1

2) Rom. 1:1; Acts 26:18; 1 Thes. 1:9; 2 Cor. 6:17; Rev. 18:18

3) Acts 2:37 with Acts 10:37

4) Rom. 10:10; Acts 2:42; 20:21; Mat. 18:19, 20; 1 Peter 2:5

XXXIV.

To this Church He has(1) made His promises, and given the signs of His Covenant, presence, love, blessing, and protection: here are the fountains and springs of His heavenly grace continually flowing forth;(2) thither ought all men to come, of all estates, that acknowledge Him to be their Prophet, Priest, and King, to be enrolled amongst His household servants, to under His heavenly conduct and government, to lead their lives in His walled sheepfold, and watered garden, to have communion here with the saints, that they may be made to be partakers of their inheritance in the Kingdom of God.

1) Mat. 28:18-20; 2 Cor. 6:18

2) Isa. 8:16; 1 Tim. 3:15; 4:16; 6:3, 5; Acts 2:41,47; Song of Sol. 4:12; Gal. 6:10; Eph. 2:19

XXXV.

And all His servants are called thither, to present their bodies and souls, and to bring their gifts God has given them; so being come, they are here by Himself bestowed in their several order, peculiar place, due use, being fitly compact and knit together, according to the effectual working of every part, to the edification of itself in love.

1 Cor. 12:6, 7, 12, 18; Rom. 12:4-6; 1 Peter 4:10; Eph. 4:16;
Col. 2:5, 6, 19; 1 Cor. 12:12ff

XXXVI.

That being thus joined, every Church has(1) power given them from Christ for their better well-being, to choose to themselves fitting persons into the office of(2) Pastors, Teachers, Elders, Deacons, being qualified according to the Word, as those which Christ has appointed in His Testament, for the feeding, governing, serving, and building up of His Church, and that none other have to power to impose them, either these or any other.

1) Acts 1:2; 6:3; 15:22, 25; 1 Cor. 16:3

2) Rom. 12:7, 8; 16:1; 1 Cor. 12:8, 28; 1 Tim. 3 chapt.; Heb. 13:7; 1 Peter 5:1-3

XXXVII.

That the Ministers aforesaid, lawfully called by the Church, where they are to administer, ought to continue in their calling, according to God's ordinance, and carefully to feed the flock of Christ committed to them, nor for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.

Heb. 5:4; Acts 4:23; 1 Tim. 4:14; John 10:3, 4; Acts 20:28;
Rom. 12:7, 8; Heb. 13:7, 17

XXXVIII.

That the due maintenance of the officers aforesaid, should be the free and voluntary communication of the Church, that according to Christ's ordinance, they that preach the Gospel, should live on the Gospel and not by constraint to be compelled from the people by a forced law.

1 Cor. 9:7,14; Gal. 6:6; 1 Thes. 5:13; 1 Tim. 5:17-18; Phil. 4:15-16

XXXIX.

That Baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament, given by Christ, to be dispensed only upon persons professing faith, or that are Disciples, or taught, who upon a profession of faith, ought to be baptized (Added later: "...and after to partake of the Lord's Supper.")

Acts 2:37, 38; 8:36-38; 18:8

XL.

The way and manner of the(1) dispensing of this ordinance the Scripture holds out to be dipping or plunging the whole body under water: it being a sign, must answer the thing signified, which are these: first, the(2) washing the whole soul in the blood of Christ; secondly, that interest the saints have in(3) death, burial, and resurrection (of Christ) ; thirdly, together with a(4) confirmation of our faith, that as certainly as the body is buried under water, and rises again, so certainly shall the bodies of the saints be raised by the power of Christ, in the day of the resurrection, to reign with Christ.

1) Mat. 3:16; John 3:23; Acts 8:38

2) Rev. 1:5; 7:14; Heb. 10:22

3) Rom. 6:3-5

4) 1 Cor. 15:28, 29

XLI.

The persons designed by Christ, to dispense this ordinance, the Scriptures hold forth to be a preaching Disciple, it being no where tied to a particular church, officer, or person extraordinarily sent, the commission enjoining the administration, being given to them under no other consideration, but as considered Disciples.

Isa. 8:16; Mat. 28:16-19; John 4:1-2; Acts 20:7; Mat. 26:26

XLII.

Christ has likewise given power to His whole church to receive in and cast out, by way of Excommunication, any member; and this power is given to every particular congregation, and not one particular person, either member or officer, but the whole.

Acts 2:47; Rom. 16:2; Mat. 18:17; 1 Cor. 5:4; 2 Cor. 2:6-8

XLIII.

And every particular member of each Church how excellent, great, or learned soever, ought to be subject to this censor and judgment of Christ; and the church ought with great care and tenderness, with due advice to proceed against her members.

Mat. 18:16-18; Acts 11:2. 3; 1 Tim. 5:19-21

XLIV.

And as Christ for the(1) keeping of this church in holy and orderly communion, places some special men over the church, who by their office are to govern, oversee, visit, watch; so likewise for the better keeping thereof in all places, by the members, He has given(2) authority, and laid duty upon all, to watch over one another.

1) Acts. 20:27, 28; Heb. 13:17, 24; Mat. 24:25; 1 Thes. 5:14

2) Mark 13:34, 37; Gal. 6:1; 1 Thes. 5:11; Jude 3, 20; Heb. 10:34-35; 12:15.

XLV.

That also such to whom God has given gifts, being tried in the church, may and ought by the appointment of the congregation, to prophesy, according to the proportion of faith, and so teach publicly the Word of God, for the edification, exhortation, and comfort of the Church.

1 Cor. 14 chapter; Rom. 12:6; 1 Peter 4:10-11; 1 Cor. 12:7; 1 Thes. 5:17-19

XLVI.

Thus being rightly gathered, established, and still proceeding in Christian communion, and obedience of the Gospel of Christ, none ought to separate for faults and corruptions, which may, and as long as the church consists of men subject to failings, will fall out and arise amongst them, even in true constituted churches, until they have in due order sought redress thereof.

Rev. 2, 3 chapters; Acts 15:12; 1 Cor. 1:10; Eph. 2:16; 3:15-16; Heb. 10:25; Jude 15; Mat. 18:17; 1 Cor. 5:4, 5

XLVII.

And although the particular congregation be distinct and several bodies, every one a compact and knit city in itself; yet are they all to walk by one and the same Rule, and by all means convenient to have the counsel and help one of another in all needful affairs of the church, as members of one body in the common faith under Christ their only Head.

1 Cor. 4:17; 14:33, 36; 16:1; Mat. 28:20; 1 Tim. 3:15; 6:13-14; Rev. 22:18-19; Col. 2:6, 19; 4:16

XLVIII.

That a civil magistrate is an ordinance of God set up by God for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well; and that all lawful things commanded by them, subjection ought to be given by us in the Lord: and that we are to make supplication and prayer for Kings, and all that are in authority, that under them we may live a peaceable and quiet life in all godliness and honesty.

Rom. 13:1-4; 1 Peter 2:13, 14; 1 Tim. 2:2

XLIX.

The supreme Magistrate of this Kingdom we believe to be the King and Parliament freely chosen by the Kingdom, and that in all those civil laws which have been acted by them, or for the present is or shall by ordained, we are bound to yield subjection and obedience unto in the Lord, as conceiving our selves bound to defend both the persons of those chosen, and all civil laws made by them, with our persons, liberties, and estates, with all that is called ours, although we should suffer never so much from them in not actively submitting to some ecclesiastical laws, which might be conceived by them to be their duties to establish which we for the present could not see, nor our consciences could submit unto; yet are we bound to yield our persons to their pleasures.

L.

And if God should provide such a mercy for us, as to incline the magistrates hearts so far to tender our consciences, as that we might be protected by them from wrong, injury, oppression and molestation, which long we formerly have groaned under by the tyranny and oppression of the Prelatical Hierarchy, which God through mercy has made this present King and Parliament wonderful honorable; as an instrument is His hand, to throw down; and we thereby have had some breathing time, we shall, we hope, look at it as a mercy beyond our expectation, and conceive ourselves further engaged for ever to bless God for it.

1 Tim. 1:2-4; Psal. 126:1; Acts 9:31

LI.

But if God with hold the magistrates allowance and furtherance herein;(1) yet we must not withstanding proceed together in Christian communion, not

daring to give place to suspend our practice, but to walk in obedience to Christ in the profession and holding forth this faith before mentioned, even in the midst of all trials and afflictions, not accounting out goods, lands, wives, husbands, children, fathers, mothers, brethren, sisters, yea, and our own lives dear unto us, so we may finish our course with joy: remembering always we ought to(2) obey God rather than men, and grounding upon the commandment, commission, and promise of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, who as He has power in heaven and earth, so also has promised, if we keep His commandments which He has given us, to be with us to the end of the world: and when we have finished our course, and kept the faith, to give us the crown of righteousness, which is laid up for all that love His appearing, and to whom we must give an account of all our actions, no man being able to discharge us of the same.

1) Acts 2:40,41; 4:19; 5:28,29,41; 20:23; 1 Thes. 3:3; Phil. 1:27-29; Dan. 3:16,17; 6:7, 10, 22, 23.

2) Matth. 28:18-20; 1 Tim. 6:13-15; Rom. 12:1.8; 1 Cor. 14:37; 2 Tim. 4:7,8; Rev. 2:10; Gal 2:4,5

LII.

And likewise unto all men is to be given whatsoever is their due; tributes, customs, and all such lawful duties, ought willingly to be by us paid and performed, our lands, goods, and bodies, to submit to the magistrate in the Lord, and the magistrate every way to be acknowledged, revered, and obeyed, according to godliness; not because of wrath only but for conscience sake. And finally, all men so to be esteemed and regarded, as is due and appropriate for their place, age, estate, and condition.

Rom. 13:5-7; Mat. 22:21; Titus 3; 1 Peter 3:13; 5:5; Eph. 5:21, 22; 6:1, 9

LII [sic].

And thus we desire to give God that which is God's, and unto Ceasor that which is Ceasor's, and unto all men that which belongs unto them, endeavoring ourselves to have always a clear conscience void of offense towards God, and towards man. And if they take this that we have said, to be heresy, then do we with the Apostle freely confess, that after the way which they call heresy, worship we the God of our Fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets and Apostles, desiring from

our souls to disclaim all heresies and opinions which are not after Christ, and to be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, as knowing our labor shall not be in vain in the Lord.

Mat. 22:21; Acts 24:14-16; John 5:28; 2 Cor. 4:17; 1 Tim. 6:3-5;
1 Cor. 15:58, 59

Conclusion

Thus we desire to give unto Christ that which is His, and unto all lawful Authority that which is their due, and to owe nothing to any many but love, to live quietly and peaceably, at is becometh saints, endeavoring in all things to keep a good conscience, and to do unto every man (of what judgment soever) as we would they should do unto us, that as our practice is, so it may prove us to a conscionable, quiet, and harmless people, (no ways dangerous or troublesome to human Society) and to labor and work with our hands, that we may not be chargeable to any, but to give to him that needeth both friends and enemies, accounting it more excellent to give than to receive. Also we confess that we know but in part, and that we are ignorant of many things which we desire and seek to know: and if any do show us that friendly part to show us from the Word of God that we see not, we shall have cause to be thankful to God and them. But if any man shall impose upon us anything that we see not to be commanded by our Lord Jesus Christ, we should in His strength, rather embrace all reproaches and tortures of men, to be stript of all outward comforts, and if it were possible, to die a thousand deaths, rather than to do anything against the least tittle of the truth of God, or against the light of our own consciences. And if any shall call what we have said heresy, then do we with the Apostle acknowledge, that after the way they call heresy, worship we the God of our Fathers, disclaiming all heresy (rightly so called) because they are against Christ, and to be steadfast and immovable, always abounding in obedience to Christ, as knowing our labor shall not be in vain in the Lord.

1 Corinthians 1:24

*Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are
helpers of your joy: for by faith we stand.*

Psalm 74:21, 22

Arise, O God, plead mine own cause. Remember how the foolish man

*blasphemeth Thee daily. O let not the oppressed return ashamed,
but let the poor and needy praise Thy name.
Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.*

THE FIRST LONDON BAPTIST

CONFESSION OF FAITH

1646 EDITION

The first edition was published in 1644. This second edition "corrected and enlarged" was originally published in 1646.

A confession of faith of seven congregations or churches of Christ in London, which are commonly, but unjustly, called Anabaptists; published for the vindication of the truth and information of the ignorant; likewise for the taking off those aspersions which are frequently, both in pulpit and print, unjustly cast upon them. Printed in London, Anno 1646.

I.

The Lord our God is but one God, whose subsistence is in Himself; whose essence cannot be comprehended by any but himself, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light, which no man can approach unto; who is in Himself most holy, every way infinite, in greatness, wisdom, power, love, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth; who giveth being, moving, and preservation to all creatures.

1 Cor. 8:6, Isa. 44:6, 46:9, Exod. 3:14, 1 Tim 6:16, Isa. 43:15; Ps. 147:5, Deut. 32:3; Job 36:5; Jer. 10:12, Exod. 34:6,7, Acts 17:28; Rom. 11:36.

II.

In this divine and infinite Being there is the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; each having the whole divine Essence, yet the Essence undivided; all infinite without any beginning, therefore but one God; who is not to be divided in nature, and being, but distinguished by several peculiar relative properties.

1 Cor. 1:3; John 1:1, 15:26, Exod. 3:14; 1 Cor. 8:6

III.

God had decreed in Himself, before the world was, concerning all things, whether necessary, accidental or voluntary, with all the circumstances of them, to work, dispose, and bring about all things according to the counsel of His own will, to His glory: (Yet without being the [chargeable] author of sin,

or having fellowship with any therein) in which appears His wisdom in disposing all things, unchangeableness, power, and faithfulness in accomplishing His decree: And God hath before the foundation of the world, foreordained some men to eternal life, through Jesus Christ, to the praise and glory of His grace; [having foreordained and] leaving the rest in their sin to their just condemnation, to the praise of His justice.

Isa. 46:10; Eph. 1:11, Rom. 11:33, Ps. 115:3; 135:6, 33:15; 1 Sam. 10:9, 26, Prov. 21:6; Exod. 21:13; Prov. 16:33, Ps. 144, Isa. 45:7, Jer. 14:22, Matt. 6:28, 30; Col. 1:16, 17; Num. 23:19, 20; Rom. 3:4; Jer. 10:10; Eph. 1:4,5; Jude 4, 6; Prov. 16:4.

IV.

In the beginning God made all things very good; created man after His own image, filled with all meet perfection of nature, and free from all sin; but long he abode not in this honor; Satan using the subtlety of the serpent to seduce first Eve, then by her seducing Adam; who without any compulsion, in eating the forbidden fruit, transgressed the command of God, and fell, whereby death came upon all his posterity; who now are conceived in sin, and by nature the children of wrath, the servants of sin, the subject of death, and other miseries in this world, and for ever, unless the Lord Jesus Christ set them free.

Gen. 1:1, Col. 1:16, Isa. 45:12, 1 Cor. 15:45, 46; Eccles. 7:29; Gen. 3:1,4,5; 2 Cor. 11:3, 1 Tim. 2:14; Gal. 3:22; Rom. 5:12, 18, 19, 6:22; Eph. 2:3.

V.

God in His infinite power and wisdom, doth dispose all things to the end for which they were created; that neither good nor evil befalls any by chance, or without His providence; and that whatsoever befalls the elect, is by His appointment, for His glory, and their good.

Job 38:11; Isa. 46:10,11, Eccles. 3:14, Mark 10:29,30; Exod. 21:13; Prov. 16:33, Rom. 8:28.

VI.

All the elect being loved of God with an everlasting love, are redeemed, quickened, and saved, not by themselves, nor their own works, lest any man should boast, but, only and wholly by God, of His own free grace and mercy,

through Jesus Christ, who is made unto us by God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, and all in all, that he that rejoiceth, might rejoice in the Lord.

Jer. 31:2; Eph. 1:3, 7, 2:8,9; 1 Thess. 5:9, Acts 13:48; 2 Cor. 5:21; Jer. 9:23,24; 1 Cor. 1:30,31; Jer. 23:6.

VII.

And this is life eternal, that we might know Him the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent. And on the contrary, the Lord will render vengeance, in flaming fire, to them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of Jesus Christ.

John 17:3; Heb. 5:9, 2 Thess. 1:8; John 6:36.

VIII.

The rule of this knowledge, faith, and obedience, concerning the worship of God, in which is contained the whole duty of man, is (not men's laws, or unwritten traditions, but) only the word of God contained [viz., written] in the holy Scriptures; in which is plainly recorded whatsoever is needful for us to know, believe, and practice; which are the only rule of holiness and obedience for all saints, at all times, in all places to be observed.

Col. 2:23; Matt 15:6,9; John 5:39, 2 Tim. 3:15,16,17; Isa. 8:20; Gal. 1:8,9; Acts 3:22,23.

IX.

The Lord Jesus Christ, of whom Moses and the Prophets wrote, the Apostles preached, He is the Son of God, the brightness of His glory, etc. by whom He made the world; who upholdeth and governeth all things that He hath made; who also when the fulness of time was come, was made of a woman, of the tribe of Judah, of the seed of Abraham and David; to wit, of the virgin Mary, the Holy Spirit coming down upon her, the power of the most High overshadowing her; and He was also tempted as we are, yet without sin.

Gen. 3:15, 22:18, 49:10; Dan. 7:13, 9:24, etc.; Prov. 8:23; John 1:1,2,3; Heb. 1:8; Gal. 4:4; Heb. 7:14; Rev. 5:5; Gen. 49:9,10, Rom. 1:3, 9:10; Matt. 1:16; Luke 3:23,26; Heb. 2:16; Isa. 53:3,4,5; Heb. 4:15.

X.

Jesus Christ is made the mediator of the new and everlasting covenant of grace between God and man, ever to be perfectly and fully the prophet, priest, and king of the Church of God for evermore.

1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 9:15; John 14:6; Isa. 9:6.7.

XI.

Unto this office He was appointed by God from everlasting; and in respect of his manhood, from the womb called, separated, and anointed most fully and abundantly with all gifts necessary, God having without measure poured out His Spirit upon Him.

Prov. 8:23; Isa. 42:6, 49:15; 11:2,3,4,5, 61:1,2; Luke 4:17, 22; John 1:14, 26, 3:34.

XII.

Concerning His mediatorship, the Scripture holds forth Christ's call to His office; for none takes this honor upon Him, but He that is called of God as was Aaron, it being an action of God, whereby a special promise being made, He ordains His Son to this office; which promise is, that Christ should be made a sacrifice for sin; that He should see His seed, and prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand; all of meer free and absolute grace towards God's elect, and without any condition foreseen in them to procure it.

Heb. 5:4,5,6, Isa. 53:10,11; John 3:16; Rom. 8:32.

XIII.

This office to be mediator, that is, to be prophet, priest, and king of the Church of God, is so proper to Christ, that neither in whole, or any part thereof, it cannot be transferred from Him to any other.

1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 7:24; Dan. 7:14; Acts 4:12; Luke 1:33; John 14:6.

XIV.

This office to which Christ is called, is threefold; a prophet, priest, and king: This number and order of offices is necessary, for in respect of our ignorance, we stand in need of His prophetic office; in respect of our great alienation from God, we need His priestly office to reconcile us; and in respect of our

averseness and utter inability to return to God, we need His kingly office, to convince, subdue, draw, uphold and preserve us to His heavenly kingdom.

Deut. 18:15; Acts 3:22,23; Heb. 3:1, 4:14,15; Ps. 2:6; 2 Cor. 5:20; Acts 26:18; Col. 1:21; John 16:8, Ps. 110:3; Song of Sol. 1:3; John 6:44; Phil. 4:13; 2 Tim. 4:18.

XV.

Concerning the prophecy of Christ, it is that whereby He hath revealed the will of God, whatsoever is needful for His servants to know and obey; and therefore He is called not only a prophet and doctor, and the apostle of our profession, and the angel of the covenant, but also the very wisdom of God, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, who for ever continueth revealing the same truth of the gospel to His people.

John 1:18; 12:49,50; 17:8; Deut. 18:15; Matt. 23:10; Heb. 3:1; Mal. 3:1; 1 Cor. 1:24; Col. 2:3.

XVI.

That He might be a prophet every way complete, it was necessary He should be God, and also that He should be man; For unless He had been God, He could never have perfectly understood the will of God; and unless He had been man, He could not suitably have unfolded it in His own person to men.

John 1:18; Acts 3:22; Deut. 18:15; Heb. 1:1.

Note:

That Jesus Christ is God is wonderfully and clearly expressed in the Scriptures. He is called the mighty God, Isa. 9:6. That Word was God, John 1:1. Christ, who is God over all, Rom 9:5. God manifested in the flesh, 1 Tim. 3:16. The same is very God, 1 John 5:20. He is the first, Rev. 1:8. He gives being to all things, and without Him was nothing made, John 1:2. He forgiveth sins, Matt. 9:6. He is before Abraham, John 8:58. He was and is, and ever will be the same, Heb. 13:8. He is always with His to the end of the world, Matt. 28:20. Which could not be said of Jesus Christ, if He were not God. And to the Sone He saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever, Heb. 1:8, John 1:18.

Also, Christ is not only perfectly God, but perfect man, made of a woman, Gal. 4:4. Made of the seed of David, Rom 1:3. Coming out of the loins of

David, Acts 2:30. Of Jesse and Judah, Acts 13:23. In that the children were partakers of flesh and blood He Himself likewise took part with them, Heb. 2:14. He took not on Him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, verse 16. So that we are bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh, Eph. 5:30. So that He that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified are all of one, Heb.2:11. See Acts 3:22, Deut. 18:15; Heb. 1:1.

XVII.

Concerning His priesthood, Christ having sanctified Himself, hath appeared once to put away sin by that one offering of Himself a sacrifice for sin, by which He hath fully finished and suffered all things God required for the salvation of His elect, and removed all rites and shadows, etc. and is now entered within the vail into the holy of holies, which is the presence of God. Also, He makes His people a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifice acceptable to God through Him. Neither doth the Father accept, nor Christ offer to the Father, any other worship or worshippers.

John 17:19; Heb. 5:7,8,9,10,12; Rom. 5:19, Eph. 5:2; Col. 1:20; Eph. 2:14, etc.; Rom. 8:34; Heb. 9:24; 8:1; 1 Pet. 2:5; John 4:23,24.

XVIII.

This priesthood was not legal or temporary, but according to the order of Melchisedec, and is stable and perfect, not for a time, but forever, which is suitable to Jesus Christ, as to Him that ever liveth. Christ was the priest, sacrifice, and altar: He was a priest according to both natures; He was a sacrifice according to His human nature; whence in Scripture it is attributed to His body, to His blood: Yet the effectualness of this sacrifice did depend upon His divine nature; therefore it is called the blood of God. He was the altar according to His divine nature, it belonging to the altar to sanctify that which is offered upon it, and so it ought to be of greater dignity than the sacrifice itself.

Heb. 7:16, etc.; Heb. 5:6, 10:10; 1 Pet. 1:18,19; Col. 1:20, 22; Heb. 9:13; Acts 20:28; Heb. 9:14, 13:10,12,15; Matt. 23:17; John 17:19.

XIX.

Concerning His kingly office, Christ being risen from the dead, and ascended into heaven, and having all power in heaven and earth, He doth spiritually govern His church, and doth exercise His power over all, angels and men,

good and bad, to the preservation and salvation of the elect, and to the overruling and destruction of His enemies. By this kingly power He applieth the benefits, virtue, and fruits of His prophecy and priesthood to His elect, subduing their sins, preserving and strengthening them in all their conflicts against Satan, the world, and the flesh, keeping their hearts in faith and filial fear by His Spirit: By this His mighty power He ruleth the vessels of wrath, using, limiting and restraining them, as it seems good to His infinite wisdom.

1 Cor. 15:4; 1 Pet. 3:21,22; Matt. 28:18,19; Luke 24:51; Acts 1:1, 5:30,31; John 19:36; Rom. 14:9; John 5:26,27; Rom. 5:6,7,8; 14:17; Gal. 5:22,23; Mark 1:27; Heb. 1:14; John 16:15; Job 2:8; Rom. 1:21, [9:17-18]; Eph. 4:17,18; 2 Pet. 2.

XX.

This His kingly power shall be more fully manifested when He shall come in glory to reign among His saints, when He shall put down all rule and authority under His feet, that the glory of the Father may be perfectly manifested in His Son, and the glory of the Father and the Son in all His members.

1 Cor. 15:24,28; Heb. 9:28; 2 Thess. 1:9,10; 1 Thess. 4:15,16,17; John 17:21, 26.

XXI.

Jesus Christ by His death did purchase salvation for the elect that God gave unto Him: These only have interest in Him, and fellowship with Him, for whom He makes intercession to His Father in their behalf, and to them alone doth God by His Spirit apply this redemption; as also the free gift of eternal life is given to them, and none else.

Eph. 1:14; Heb. 5:9; Matt. 1:21; John 17:6; Heb. 7:25; 1 Cor. 2:12; Rom. 8:29,30; 1 John 5:12; John 15:35, 3:16.

XXII.

Faith is the gift of God, wrought in the hearts of the elect by the Spirit of God; by which faith they come to know and believe the truth of the Scriptures, and the excellency of them above all other writings, and all things in the world, as they hold forth the glory of God in His attributes, the excellency of Christ in His nature and offices, and of the power and fulness of the Spirit in its [His] workings and operations; and so are enabled to cast

their souls upon His truth thus believed.

Eph. 2:8; John 6:29, 4:10; Phil. 1:29; Gal. 5:22; John 17:17; Heb. 4:11,12; John 6:63.

XXIII.

All those that have this precious faith wrought in them by the Spirit, can never finally nor totally fall away; seeing the gifts of God are without repentance; so that He still begets and nourisheth in them faith, repentance, love, joy, hope, and all the graces of the Spirit unto immortality; and though many storms and floods arise, and beat against them, yet they shall never be able to take them off that foundation and rock, which by faith they are fastened upon; not withstanding, through unbelief, and the temptations of Satan, the sensible sight of this light and love, be clouded and overwhelmed for a time; yet God is still the same, and they shall be sure to be kept by the power of God unto salvation, where they shall enjoy their purchased possession, they being engraven upon the palms of His hands, and their names having been written in the book of life from all eternity.

Matt. 7:24, 25; John 13:10, 10:28, 29; 1 Pet. 1:4, 5, 6; Isa. 49:13, 14, 15, 16.

XXIV.

Faith is ordinarily begotten by the preaching of the gospel, or word of Christ, without respect to any power or agency in the creature; but it being wholly passive, and dead in trespasses and sins, doth believe and is converted by no less power than that which raised Christ from the dead.

Rom. 10:17; 1 Cor. 1:28; Rom. 9:16; Ezek. 16:16; Rom. 3:12, 1:16; Eph. 1:19, Col. 2:12.

XXV.

The preaching of the gospel to the conversion of sinners, is absolutely free; no way requiring as absolutely necessary, any qualifications, preparations, or terrors of the law, or preceding ministry of the law, but only and alone the naked soul, a sinner and ungodly, to receive Christ crucified, dead and buried, and risen again; who is made a prince and a Savior for such sinners as through the gospel shall be brought to believe on Him.

John 3:14,15, 1:12; Isa. 55:1; John 7:37; 1 Tim. 1:15; Rom. 4:5, 5:8;

Acts 5:30,31, 2:36, 1 Cor. 1:22,24.

XXVI.

The same power that converts to faith in Christ, carrieth on the soul through all duties, temptations, conflicts, sufferings; and whatsoever a believer is, he is by grace, and is carried on in all obedience and temptations by the same.

1 Pet. 1:5, 2 Cor. 12:9, 1 Cor. 15:10; Phil. 2:12, 13; John 15:5; Gal. 2:19,20.

XXVII.

All believers are by Christ united to God; by which union, God is one with them, and they are one with Him; and that all believers are the sons of God, and joint heirs with Christ, to whom belong all the promises of this life, and that which is to come.

1 Thess. 1:1; John 17:21, 20:17; Heb. 2:11, 1 John 4:16; Gal. 2:19,20.

XXVIII.

Those that have union with Christ, are justified from all their sins by the blood of Christ, which justification is a gracious and full acquittance of a guilty sinner from all sin, by God, through the satisfaction that Christ hath made by His death for all their sins, and this applied (in manifestation of it) through faith.

1 John 1:7; Heb. 10:14, 9:26; 2 Cor. 5:19; Rom. 3:23; Acts 13:38,39; Rom. 5:1, 3:25,30.

XXIX.

All believers are a holy and sanctified people, and that sanctification is a spiritual grace of the new covenant, and an effect of the love of God manifested in the soul, whereby the believer presseth after a heavenly and evangelical obedience to all the commands, which Christ as head and king in His new covenant hath prescribed to them.

1 Cor. 12; 1 Pet. 2:9; Eph. 1:4; 1 John 4:16; Matt. 28:20.

XXX.

All believers through the knowledge of that justification of life given by the Father and brought forth by the blood of Christ have as their great privilege

of that new covenant, peace with God, reconciliation, whereby they that were afar off are made nigh by that blood, and have peace passing all understanding; yea, joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received atonement.

2 Cor. 5:19; Rom. 5:9,10; Isa. 54:10; Eph. 2:13,14, 4:7; Rom. 5:10,11.

XXXI.

All believers in the time of this life, are in a continual warfare and combat against sin, self, the world, and the devil; and are liable to all manner of afflictions, tribulations and persecutions, being predestined and appointed thereunto, and whatsoever the saints possess or enjoy of God spiritually, is by faith; and outward and temporal things are lawfully enjoyed by a civil right by them who have no faith.

Rom. 7:23,24; Eph. 6:10,11, etc.; Heb. 2:9,10, 2 Tim. 3:12; Rom. 8:29; 1 Thess. 3:3; Gal. 2:19,20; 2 Cor. 5:7; Deut. 2:5.

XXXII.

The only strength by which the saints are enabled to encounter with all oppositions and trials, is only by Jesus Christ, who is the captain of their salvation, being made perfect through sufferings; who hath engaged His faithfulness and strength to assist them in all their afflictions, and to uphold them in all their temptations, and to preserve them by His power to His everlasting kingdom.

John 16:33, 15:5; Phil. 4:11, Heb. 2:9,10; 2 Tim. 4:18.

XXXIII.

Jesus Christ hath here on earth a [manifestation of His] spiritual kingdom, which is His Church, whom He hath purchased and redeemed to Himself as a peculiar inheritance; which Church is a company of visible saints, called and separated from the world by the word and Spirit of God, to the visible profession of faith of the gospel, being baptized into that faith, and joined to the Lord, and each other, by mutual agreement in the practical enjoyment of the ordinances commanded by Christ their head and king.

Matt. 11:11; 2 Thess. 1:1; 1 Cor. 1:2; Eph. 1:1; Rom. 1:7; Acts 19:8,9, 26:18; 2 Cor. 6:17; Rev. 18:4; Acts 2:37, 10:37; Rom. 10:10;

Matt. 18:19,20; Acts 2:42, 9:26; 1 Pet. 2:5.

XXXIV.

To this Church He hath made His promises, and giveth the signs of His covenant, presence, acceptation, love, blessing and protection. Here are the fountains and springs of His heavenly graces flowing forth to refresh and strengthen them.

Matt. 28:18, etc.; 1 Cor. 11:24, 3:21; 2 Cor. 6:18; Rom. 9:4,5; Ps. 133:3; Rom. 3:7,10; Ezek. 47:2.

XXXV.

And all His servants of all estates (are to acknowledge Him to be their prophet, priest and king;) and called thither to be enrolled among His household servants, to present their bodies and souls, and to bring their gifts God hath given them, to be under His heavenly conduct and government, to lead their lives in this walled sheepfold, and watered garden, to have communion here with His saints, that they may be assured that they are made meet to be partakers of their inheritance in the kingdom of God; and to supply each others wants, inward and outward; (and although each person hath a propriety in his own estate, yet they are to supply each others wants, according as their necessities shall require, that the name of Jesus Christ may not be blasphemed through the necessity of any in the Church) and also being come, they are here by Himself to be bestowed in their several order, due place, peculiar use, being fitly compact and knit together according to the effectual working of every part, to the edifying of itself in love.

Acts. 2:41,47; Isa. 4:3, 1 Cor. 12:6,7, etc.; Ezek. 20:37,40; Song of Sol. 4:12; Eph. 2:19; Rom. 12:4,5,6; Col. 1:12, 2:5,6,19; Acts 20:32, 5:4, 2:44,45, 4:34,35; Luke 14:26; 1 Tim. 6:1; Eph. 4:16.

XXXVI.

Being thus joined, every [local] church hath power given them from Christ, for their wellbeing, to choose among themselves meet persons for elders and deacons, being qualified according to the word, as those which Christ hath appointed in His testament, for the feeding, governing, serving, and building up of His Church; and that none have any power to impose on them either these or any other.

Acts 1:23,26, 6:3, 15:22,25; Rom. 12:7,8; 1 Tim. 3:2,6,7; 1 Cor.

12:8,28; Heb 13:7,17; 1 Pet. 5:1,2,3,4:15.

XXXVII.

That the ministers lawfully called, as aforesaid, ought to continue in their calling and place according to God's ordinance, and carefully to feed the flock of God committed to them, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.

Heb. 5:4; John 10:3,4; Acts 20:28,29; Rom. 12:7,8; Heb. 13:7,17; 1 Pet. 5:1,2,3.

XXXVIII.

The ministers of Christ ought to have whatsoever they shall need, supplied freely by the church, that according to Christ's ordinance they that preach the Gospel should live of the gospel by the law of Christ.

1 Cor. 9:7,14; Gal. 6:8; Phil. 4:15,16; 2 Cor. 10:4; 1 Tim. 1:2; Ps. 110:3.

XXXIX.

Baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament, given by Christ, to be dispensed upon persons professing faith, or that are made disciples; who upon profession of faith, ought to be baptized, and after to partake of the Lord's Supper.

Matt. 28:18,19; John 4:1; Mark 16:15,16; Acts 2:37,38, 8:36,37, etc.

XL.

That the way and manner of dispensing this ordinance, is dipping or plunging the body under water; it being a sign, must answer the things signified, which is, that interest the saints have in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ: And that as certainly as the body is buried under water, and risen again, so certainly shall the bodies of the saints be raised by the power of Christ, in the day of the resurrection, to reign with Christ.

Matt. 3:16; Mark 15:9 reads (into Jordan) in Greek; John 3:23; Acts 8:38; Rev. 1:5, 7:14; Heb. 10:22; Rom. 6:3,4,5,6; 1 Cor. 15:28,29. The word *baptizo* signifies to dip or plunge (yet so as convenient garments be both upon the administrator and subject with all modesty).

XXI.

The person designed by Christ to dispense baptism, the Scripture holds forth to be a disciple; it being no where tied to a particular church officer, or person extraordinarily sent the commission enjoining the administration, being given to them as considered disciples, being men able to preach the gospel.

Isa. 8:16; Eph. 2:7; Matt 28:19; John 4:2; Acts 20:7, 11:10; 1 Cor. 11:2, 10:16,17; Rom. 16:2; Matt. 18:17.

XXII.

Christ hath likewise given power to His Church to receive in, and cast out, any member that deserves it; and this power is given to every congregation, and not to one particular person, either member or officer, but in relation to the whole body, in reference to their faith and fellowship.

Rom. 15:2; Matt. 18:17; 1 Cor. 5:4,11,14, 12:6, 2:3; 2 Cor. 2:6,7.

XXIII.

And every particular member of each church, how excellent, great, or learned soever, is subject to this censure and judgment; and that the church ought not without great care and tenderness, and due advice, but by the rule of faith, to proceed against her members.

Matt. 18:16, 17:18; Acts 11:2,3; 1 Tim. 5:19, etc.; Col. 4:17; Acts 15:1,2,3.

XXIV.

Christ for the keeping of this church in holy and orderly communion, placeth some special men over the church; who by their office, are to govern, oversee, visit, watch; so likewise for the better keeping thereof, in all places by the members, He hath given authority, and laid duty upon all to watch over one another.

Acts 20:27,28; Heb. 13:17,24; Matt. 24:45; 1 Thess. 5:2, 14; Jude 3,20; Heb. 10:34,35 [cf. 24,25], 12:15.

XXV.

Also such to whom God hath given gifts in the church, may and ought to prophecy [viz., teach] according to the proportion of faith, and to teach publicly the word of God, for the edification, exhortation, and comfort of the

church.

1 Cor. 14:3, etc.; Rom 12:6; 1 Pet. 4:10, 11; 1 Cor. 12:7; 1 Thess. 5:19, etc.

XLVI.

Thus being rightly gathered, and continuing in the obedience of the gospel of Christ, none are to separate for faults and corruptions (for as long as the church consists of men subject to failings, there will be difference in the true constituted church) until they have in due order, and tenderness, sought redress thereof.

Rev. 2, 3; Acts 15:12; 1 Cor. 1:10; Heb. 10:25; Jude 19; Rev. 2:20,21,27; Acts 15:1,2; Rom. 14:1; 15:1,2,3.

XLVII.

And although the particular congregations be distinct, and several bodies, every one as a compact and knit city within itself; yet are they all to walk by one rule of truth; so also they (by all means convenient) are to have the counsel and help one of another, if necessity require it, as members of one body, in the common faith, under Christ their head.

1 Cor. 4:17, 14:33,36, 16:1; Ps. 122:3; Eph. 2:12,19; Rev. 21; 1 Tim. 3:15, 6:13,14; 1 Cor. 4:17; Acts 15:2,3; Song of Sol. 8:8,9; 2 Cor. 8:1,4, 13:14.

XLVIII.

A civil magistracy is an ordinance of God, set up by Him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well; and that in all lawful things, commanded by them, subjection ought to be given by us in the Lord, not only for wrath, but for conscience sake; and that we are to make supplications and prayers for kings, and all that are in authority, that under them we may live a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty.

Rom. 13:1,2, etc.; 1 Pet. 2:13,14; 1 Tim. 2:1,2,3.

Note:

The supreme magistracy of this kingdom we acknowledge to be the king and parliament (now established) freely chosen by the kingdom, and that we are to maintain and defend all civil laws and civil officers made by them, which are for the good of the commonwealth. And we acknowledge with

thankfulness, that God hath made this present king and parliament honorable in throwing down the prelatical hierarchy, because of their tyranny and oppression over us, under which this kingdom long groaned, for which we are ever engaged to bless God, and honor them for the same. And concerning the worship of God; there is but one lawgiver, which is able to save and destroy, James 4:12; which is Jesus Christ, who hath given laws and rules sufficient in His word for His worship; and for any to make more, were to charge Christ with want of wisdom, or faithfulness, or both, in not making laws enough, or not good enough for His house: Surely it is our wisdom, duty, and privilege, to observe Christ's laws only, Ps 2:6,9,10,12. So it is the magistrates duty to tender the liberty of mens' consciences, Eccles. 8:8 (which is the tenderest thing unto all conscientious men, and most dear unto them, and without which all other liberties will not be worth the naming, much less enjoying) and to protect all under them from all wrong, injury, oppression and molestation; so it is our duty not to be wanting in nothing which is for their honor and comfort, and whatsoever is for the wellbeing of the commonwealth wherein we live; it is our duty to do, and we believe it to be our express duty, especially in matters of religion, to be fully persuaded in our minds of the lawfulness of what we do, as knowing whatsoever is not of faith is sin. And as we cannot do anything contrary to our understandings and consciences, so neither can we forebear the doing of that which our understandings and consciences bind us to do. And if the magistrate should require us to do otherwise, we are to yield our persons in a passive way to their power, as the saints of old have done, James 5:4. And thrice happy shall he be, that shall lose his life for witnessing (though but for the least tittle) of the truth of the Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. 5; Gal. 5.

XLIX.

But in case we find not the magistrate [or governing authority] to favor us herein; yet we dare not suspend our practice, because we believe we ought to go in obedience to Christ, in professing the faith which was once delivered to the saints, which faith is declared in the holy Scriptures, and this our confession of faith a part of them, and that we are to witness to the truth of the Old and New Testaments unto the death, if necessity require, in the midst of all trials and afflictions, as His saints of old have done; not accounting our goods, lands, wives, children, fathers, mothers, brethren, sisters; yea and our own lives dear unto us, so we may finish our course with joy; remembering

always, that we ought to obey God rather than men, who will when we have finished our course, and kept the faith, give us the crown of righteousness; to whom we must give an account of all our actions, and no man being able to discharge us of the same.

Acts 2:40,41, 4:19, 5:28,29, 20:23; 1 Thess. 3:3; Phil. 1:28,29; Dan. 3:16,17, 6:7,10,22,23; 1 Tim. 6:13,14; Rom. 12:1,8; 1 Cor. 14:37; Rev. 2:20; 2 Tim. 4:6,7,8; Rom. 14:10, 12; 2 Cor. 5:10; Ps. 49:7, 50:22.

L.

It is lawful for a Christian to be a magistrate or civil officer; and also it is lawful to take an oath, so it be in truth, and in judgment, and in righteousness, for confirmation of truth, and ending of all strife; and that by wrath and vain oaths the Lord is provoked and this land mourns.

Acts 8:38, 10:1,2,35; Rom. 16:23; Deut. 6:13; Rom. 1:9; 2 Cor. 10,11; Jer. 4:2; Heb. 6:16.

LI.

We are to give unto all men whatsoever is their due, as their place, age, estate, requires; and that we defraud no man of anything, but to do unto all men, as we would they should do unto us.

1 Thess. 4:6; Rom. 13:5,6,7; Matt. 22:21; Titus 3; 1 Pet. 2:15,17, 5:5; Eph. 5:21,23, etc. , 6:1,9; Titus 3:1,2,3.

LII.

There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust, and everyone shall give an account of himself to God, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

Acts 24:15; 1 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:12. [Matt. 25; Rev. 22:11, 12, 13, 14, 15.]

THE CONCLUSION

Thus we desire to give unto Christ that which is His; and unto all lawful authority that which is their due; and to owe nothing to any man but love; to live quietly and peaceably, as it becometh saints, endeavoring in all things to keep a good conscience, and to do unto every man (of what judgment soever)

as we would they should do unto us, that as our practice is, so it may prove us to be a conscionable [viz., reasonable], quiet, and harmless people (no ways dangerous or troublesome to human society) and to labor and work with our hands that we may not be chargeable to any, but to give to him that needeth, both friends and enemies, accounting it more excellent to give than to receive. Also we confess, that we know but in part, and that we are ignorant of many things which we desire and seek to know; and if any shall do us that friendly part to show us from the word of God that which we see not, we shall have cause to be thankful to God and them; but if any man shall impose upon us anything that we see not to be commanded by our Lord Jesus Christ, we should in His strength rather embrace all reproaches and tortures of men, to be stripped of all outward comforts, and if it were possible, to die a thousand deaths, rather than to do anything against the least tittle of the truth of God or against the light of our own consciences. And if any shall call what we have said heresy, then do we with the Apostle acknowledge, that after the way they call heresy, worship we the God of our fathers, disclaiming all heresies (rightly so called) because they are against Christ, and to be steadfast and unmovable, always abounding in obedience to Christ, as knowing our labor shall not be in vain in the Lord.

Psalm 74:21,22

*Arise, O God, plead thine own cause; remember how the
foolish man blasphemeth Thee daily. O let not the
oppressed return ashamed, but let the poor and needy
praise Thy name.*

Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.

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.

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

THE FAITH
AND
PRACTISE
OF THIRTY CONGREGATIONS,
GATHERED ACCORDING TO THE PRIMITIVE PATTERN
PREFACE

Published (in love) by consent of two from each Congregation, appointed for that purpose.

1. To inform those who have a desire to know what Religious Duties they hold forth.
2. To undeceive those that are mis-informed thereof.
3. To the end that the said Congregations may in love, and the spirit of Meekness, be informed by any that conceive they walk amiss.

*Rom. 12. 18. If it be possible, as much as
in you is, have Peace with all men.*

To all the Saints and Churches of God, who walk according to the commands of Jesus Christ, in England, Wales, Army, or else-where.

Dearly Beloved, and Fellow Citizens of the household of God, Grace, Mercy, and Peace be multiplyed unto you from God, through Jesus Christ; The Lord preserve your minds and hearts by his holy Spirit, with all those gifts of his Free Grace which he hath bestowed upon you, to adorn the doctrine of the Gospel in every thing whereunto ye are called, to live to the glory and praise of his Grace.

Loving Brethren, if we could have conveniently convayed this Copie unto your hands before it went to the Press, doubtless we might have gained your Christian Advice and Assistance herein, which might have been very Beneficial to the Truth, wherein you are with us alike concerned and engaged; but by reason of the distance of place, and also being unacquainted, hath hindred our sending; but we hope our forwardness herein will not be any hinderance to you for the future, to manifest your concurrence with us, so far as we own the Truth; for the preserving our Union with God, and our Joy and Peace with each other, but the rather to give you occasion to make use of the

Ability and Power God bath betruſted you with, for our Informations in what you judge is wanting, and for our further Confirmation and Encouragement in thoſe things you approve of with us, have we published this ensuing Treatiſe; That ſo we may agree with love in peace and truth, by the Aſſiſtance of our bleſſed Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. So with our Prayers, we ſubſcribe our ſelves Your Servants in the Lord.

[Signatures of its Sixty-one authors here.]

THE FAITH
AND
PRACTISE
OF THIRTY CONGREGATIONS

Ezek. 43. 11

And if they be ashamed of all that they have done, show them the form of the house, and the fashion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and all the laws thereof; and write it in their sight, that they may keep the whole form thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and do them.

Matth. 5. 16.

Let your light so shine before men, &c.

Hebr. 3.6.

But Christ as a Son, over his own &c.

1. That that God whom we acknowledge, ought to be worshipped by all, and above all that are called Gods, and he is Infinite in power and wisdom, universal, invisible, eternal. Ps. 96. 3. 4. Jer. 23. 24. Col. 1. 17. Rom. 1. 20.
2. That God created all creatures visible and invisible, by his own wisdom and power, Col. 1. 16. Jer. 10. 12.
3. That God preserveth all creatures which are in being. Nehemiah. 9. 6. Rom. 2. 36.
4. That the creation doth plainly declare the Power and Righteousness of God; Rom. 1. 20. Isa. 40. 26.
5. That God commandeth men to take a view of his Wise, Powerful, and Righteous workes of creation. Isa. 40. 26.
6. That God by his good creatures called or calleth men to a serious consideration, or meditation, that they may further understand his Wisdom and Power. Rom. 1. 20.

7. That God doth command men to speak or declare that which they have learned by the teaching of the creatures; Psal. 145. 5.
8. That the consideration of the Lord's handyworks in creatures, is a means to beget thoughts of God, and of our selves, sutable to his greatness, and our inferiority; Psal. 8. 3, 4.
9. That whatsoever good Meditations, or serious Considerations we have of the glorious works of Creation, ought to break forth with admiration unto thankfulness to God, Psal. 136. from ver. 3. to ver. 9.
10. That those who did refuse to worship or glorifie God answerably to the teaching of the Creation, the Lord gave them over, or forsook them so far, that they became so desperately wicked, that they did things contrary to nature, Rom. 1. 26, 27.
11. God created or made Adam a living soul, and in his own Likeness in Sovereignty or Dominion; Gen. 1. 26. 27.
12. That God gave unto Adam Lawes or commands, that he might know his Will; Gen. 2. 16. 17.
13. That God declared unto Adam what penalty or punishment he would cause to befall him, if he disobeyed his Will, Gets. 2. 17.
14. That Adam did sin or disobey the righteous commands of the Lord, Gen. 3. 6.
15. That God told Adam very plainly what death it should be that he would cause to come on him, and what sorrows should attend him in the meanwhile; Gen. 3. 17, 19.
16. That all mankind are liable to partake of the same death or punishment which the Lord in his righteous judgment caused to fall on Adam for his transgression; Rom. 5. 18.
17. That Jesus Christ, through (or by) the grace of God, suffered death for all mankind, or every man; Heb. 2. 9.
18. That Christ Jesus, the second Adam, will as certainly raise all mankind from that death which fell on them, through or by the first Adam's sin or offence, as surely as they partake of it; Rom. 5. 18.
19. That Jesus Christ, his Lordly or Kingly preheminance over all mankind, is vindicated or maintained in the Scriptures account, by vertue of his dying

or suffering for them; Rom. 14. 9.

20. That God's Word, Son, or Spirit, are one, 1 Joh. 5. 7. Jude 1. Heb. 10. 29. Rom. 15. 16.

God and his Word are one; Joh. 1. 1. The Word quickneth, Psal. 119. 50. The Son quickeneth, Eph. 2. 1. And the spirit quickneth Joh. 6. 63. So they are one. God giveth Gifts, and the Son doth the same, also the Holy Ghost, So they are one. Jam. 1. 71. Eph. 4. 10, 11. Acts 2. 38. 1 Thes. 1. 5. Joh. 6. 44. Jo. 14. 6. Eph. 1. 18. 1 Cor. 12. 3. Math. 10. 40. Gal. 3. 2.

21. That the Lord of all mankind, Jesus Christ, bath the power of giving Lawes for the governing or ruling every man in the World in spiritual worship, Isa. 9. 6, 7. Math. 28. 18. 19, 20.

22. That this Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ, is the only or principal high Priest, which offered up sacrifice, or made reconciliation for the Sins of the people, Heb. 2. 17.

23. That the high Priest Jesus Christ, is not onely King or Governour, but also the Apostle or Prophet of the Truth professed, or the true profession of Saints Heb. 3. 1.

24. That all the riches appertaining to a spiritual and eternal life, were treasured up in Jesus Christ. Col. 2. 3.

25. That there is not, neither ever was any man endued with any abilities and power to do the revealed will of God, but it was given him from above. Jam. 1. 17.

26. That the gifts of God spring from the pleasure of his will, or of his free grace; even the Lord Jesus Christ sprung from thence, from whom commeth all spiritual mercies: Rom. 8. 32. Heb. 2. 9.

27. That Jesus Christ was faithfull in all things whereunto he was appointed, Heb. 3. 1, 2.

28. That Jesus Christ was not only the Lawmaker, but the Law giver to every man that liveth in the world, in that he giveth every man therein some measure of light. Jo. 1. 9.

29. That God of his free love giveth several gifts unto men, dividing severally as it pleaseth him, by one and the same spirit; 1 Cor. 12. 11. Eph. 4. 7.

30. That the gifts of God given unto men of his own free grace, though never

so richly they may be furnished both with abilities and power, yet those gifts of grace do not demonstrate, or declare them to be faithfull servants; but it doth very plainly prove, that they are called upon thereby to be faithfull Servants; 1 Cor. 4. 1. 2.

31. That those gifts which God of his free grace gives unto men to the enabling or empowering them to obey or believe in his name, are called the grace of God, as they spring from the spirit of grace; Acts. 18.17.

32. That when God of his own bountifulness hath given gifts unto men to be improved by them to the praise of his grace, as to believe or obey, then those so endued are Stewards of the grace of God, 1 Pet. 4. 10.

33. That God requireth or commandeth service of men, answerable to those gifts of grace which he of his good pleasure hath bestowed upon them, Col. 2. 6. Joh. 12. 37.

34. That it is the gracious pleasure of God, that Jesus Christ his life, death, and resurrection, should be made known unto men, and by men, as arguments, or motives, to allure or provoke them to live holy and righteous in this present world; Eph. 5. 2, 10. Rom. 6. 4, to ver. 14.

35. That God requireth that man should worship him in Spirit and in truth, or with all the heart, before they outwardly make a profession of him: Acts 8. 36. 37.

36. That all actions performed by man towards God, ought to flow from a principle of Love; 1 Cor. 13. 1, 2, 3.

37. That God loves man first, and declareth, or maketh known his love to men, before any man can Act from a principle of love in obedience to him, Jo. 15. 16.

38. That whosoever obeyeth God with those gifts of his free grace, (as abilities and power to do his will) never so faithfully, Evangelically, or Unfainedly, giving him the glory of those performances; yet thus believing or obeying doth not procure salvation as eternal life, neither are they any cause at all to move God to bestow it; Ezek. 16. from ver. 3. to ver, 10. Eph. 2. 9. Rom. 4. 2. Jo. 15. 15.

39. That the ground or principal end of mens believing or obeying God, ought to be for the advancing of the glory of God, or for the Praise of his free grace; 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20.

40. That those who serve or fear the Lord, honouring or glorifying him with his gifts bestowed on them, to the praise of his free grace, do demonstratively of openly manifest themselves to be his faithful servants, or children, 1 Jo. 3. 10. Acts 10. 35.

41. That those which serve the Lord with integrity of mind and spirit, improving their abilities and power given unto them of God, to his glory and praise, are not only called faithful Servants, or the children of the living God, but they have the promises of God to be intrusted with more of the manifestations of himself, which is called the misterie which hath bin hid from many ages, and generations, which the disobedient shall not injoy. Col. 1. 26. 27.

42. That those which love the Lord Jesus Christ, so as to walke in his appointed ways with that strength of ability and power which God of his own mercy bath given unto them, they shall have peace of conscience, being freed from anguish of spirit, having their hearts comforted by the Holy Ghost; Rom. 2. 10.

43. That all those that continue stedfastly unto the end of their lives, pressing forward to the mark (Jesus Christ) that is set before them, shall not only have the comfort and joy which is a part of their portion in this life, but they shall also have a Crown of eternal glory in the life to come; Rev. 22. 14. 2 Tim. 4. 8.

44. That God of his free grace or love, called or calleth sinners to repentance, and afforded or affordeth them time or opportunity to repent or returne unto him; Rom. 4.2.

45. That all those who refuse to improve the gifts of grace which God hath afforded them, so that they repent not, neither turne to him in obedience to his commands made manifest unto them, they do despise the goodness of God or his free grace, denying the Lord that bought them, and so are liable to destruction, 1 Pet. 2. 1, 2.

46. That whosoever shall preach, teach, or practise any doctrine in the worship of God, pretending it in the name of Jesus Christ, which is not to be heard or read of in the record of God, which was given by inspiration of the holy Ghost; such teachers are lyable to the curse of God, howsoever, countenanced by men, Gal. 1. 8, 9.

47. That the Baptisme which the Lord Jesus commanded his disciples to teach, ought to be known by every one, before they submit themselves, or obey it; Acts. 2. 38. 41.

48. That the way and manner of baptising, both before the death of Christ, and since his resurrection and ascension, was to go into the water, and to be baptised; Math. 3. 6. Mar. 1. 5. and 8, 9.

49. That when Baptisme is made known, or any other Action of obedience, then for men to refuse it, they are said to reject the counsel of God against themselves; Luk. 7. 30.

50. That those which received the word of God preached by the Ministrie of the Gospel, and were Baptized according to the Counsel of God, at the same time or day they were of the visible Church of God, Acts. 2. 41.

51. That the only foundation of the Church of God, is the Doctrines of the Apostles or Prophets, as they spring from Jesus Christ the chiefe corner stone, whereon this or anyother people are to be built together as the house of God; Eph. 2. 20, 21.

52. That the chief or only ends of a people baptised according to the counsel of God, when they meet together as the congregation or fellowship of Christ, are, or ought to be, for to walk sutablely; or to give up themselves unto a holy conformity to all the Laws or Ordinances of Jesus Christ, answerable to the gifts and graces received, improving them for the glory of God, and the edification of each other in love, Eph. 4. 15, 16.

53. That Jesus Christ took Bread, and the juice of the Vine, and brake, and gave to his Disciples, to eat and drink with thanksgiving; which practise is left upon record as a memorial of his suffering, to continue in the Church until he come again; 1 Cor. 11. 23, 24, 25, 26.

54. That the Church ought to call upon God, seeking him by prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, and to be thankful to him for mercies received, sounding forth his praises with understanding. Eph. 6. 16, 17, 18.

55. That if any one of the fellowship neglect the watching over his own heart, and so break out into an evill life and conversation, and all good meanes that God hath appointed hath been used towards such a one, and that person bath not performed, then ought not such a one to break bread with obedient walkers, to shew forth the death of Christ, seeing he doth deny him in life and

conversation; 1 Cor. 5. 12.

56. That the people of God ought to have a tender respect towards them, as long as there is any hope of being instrumental in the use of that means which God hath appointed for the recovering them out of the snare of sin or wickedness. 2. Thes. 3. 14, 25.

57. That there be contributions made for the relief of those that cannot help themselves with food and rayment, that are willing to the utmost to put forth their strength and skill in some lawful Way or Calling, especially those that are of the household of Faith; such as through sickness or weakness of body cannot labour. Gal. 6. 9. 20.

58. That it is the good pleasure of God, which hath given gifts of his grace to the Saints or Church of God, that some of the gifted men should be appointed, or set apart to attend upon the preaching of the word, for the further edifying of the Churches, that they may be enabled to stand against all oppositions according as necessity requires, to the glory of God and their comfort. Eph. 4. 11, 21.

59. That it is the will of God that those Saints or members of the fellowship which are appointed so to spend their labors in teaching or exhorting them in the knowledge of God to their edification and consolation, ought to have maintenance of those that receive spiritual food by them. 1 Cor. 9. 11.

60. That the maintenance of the Ministers which labour in the Word of God, ought to be the free and Charitable Benevolence, or the chearful contribution of those that acknowledge themselves members of the same fellowship; 2 Cor. 9. 13.

61. That the servants of God, or the Ministers of the Gospel, ought to be content with necessary food and rayment, and to labour with their hands, that they may not be overchargeable, x Cor. 4. 22. because they are to teach that doctrine to every member. Heb. 13. 5.

62. That those servants of God which labour in the word much, and well, ought to be had in very good estimation; 1 Tim. 5. 27.

63. That the Church of Jesus Christ ought not to think of any man above what is meet, lest that they give that honour to man, which properly and alone belongeth to God; Psal. 65. 1. 2 Cor. 12.6.

64. That the Church hath directions of God to set apart some men that are

suteably qualified, to oversee, or order the affairs concerning the poor distressed members of Christ, that they may not be neglected, and so perish for want of food and rayment, and to take off that work from lyjng too heavy upon the Core of those which labour in the word and doctrine; Acts. 6. 3, 4.

65. That if the podr fearing God, cannot conveniently have a competent maintenance, for the supply of their necessities in that society whereunto they must commonly resort, that then those men that have the Core laid upon them, send or give intelligence to the other Churches or saints of God, who have ingaged themselves by declaring their willingness towards the relief of such a distressed people, Rom. 15. 26.

66. That those men which the Church of God are to make such uses of as the setting them to minister unto the saints in things spritual or temporall, it is required that the Church judge those men found in the faith, that their lives and conversations be unblameable, that those which are without, cannot have any just occasion to speak reproachfully of them, that they be not covetous of filthy lucre, neither selfwilled, but loving and patient towards all men, apt to teach, and to do good works answer able to their abilities. Titus 1. 7, 8. 9. Acts. 6. 3.

67. That some men amongst the brotherhood who are able to judge in causes of difference that may arise betwixt them in the Church, may be approved or appointed to put an end thereto without partiality, that there may be no unnecessary strivings in the Law to vex one another; 1 Cor. 6. 5, 6, 7.

68. That whosoever of the Society or Church of God which shall willfully or Carelessly neglect any lawful way or calling, and to fall into hunger and nakedness, ought to be exhorted with love and meekness, to labour with their abilities in some honest way or calling for their relief which being done orderly, and he or they will not reform, so that sutable exhortations take no place, such an one shall be excluded or ex-communicated, as one that hath denied the faith; 1. Tim. 5. 8.

69. That the offended ought to proceed according to rule, not delaying or prolonging time, but out of a tender Core, that their hearts may not be hardned by a custome in sin, that thereby the reclaiming of them from sin may be done with less difficulty; Mat. 18. 15, 16, 17.

70. That if any controversie should so fall out, that the case cannot easily be determined by that society or church where it is first presented, that then use

be made of some other society which they are in fellowship with, for their assistance therein; Acts 16. 1, 2.

71. That there be an orderly improving those gifts that God of his free grace hath bestowed on the Saints, that one may not hinder another, but as occasion serveth, one by one, speaking the things that they have learned of God, that the hearers may be profited, and so put in a capacity to judge of things concerning the glory of God, and their own peace; 1 Cor. 14. 30, 31.

72. That if any one which hath been of the fellowship of Christ, and hath so far subjected himself to temptations that he denyeth to live righteously, or in the fear and love of God and makes shipwreck of Faith and a good Conscience, for which he hath been excommunicated according to Order, that it be recorded, and made known to other the Churches, for prevention of evils in them; 1 Tim. 1. 19, 20.

73. That Fasting and Prayer ought to be used, and laying on of hands, for the Ordaining of servants or Officers to attend about the service of God; Acts 13. 3.

74. That we ought to behave ourselves towards all men, no otherwise then we would freely and cheerfully they in the like case (if it should fall out) should do toward us, and that we ought to seek a peaceable life with all men, as far as possibly we can, keeping faith and a good conscience; Luke 6. 31. Rom. 12. 18. 1 Tim. 1. 19.

75. That we ought to clear our selves, not only from evil Thoughts harbouring in our hearts, or the evils in life and conversation; but as far as we can, vindicate our selves from all those scandalous aspersions that daylie fall about our ears, setting our good names on fire, to the dishonour of God, whereof many are the Instruments by their wilful contrivances, or by the mis-informations of others, which father upon such principles and practises as we abhor, through ignorant mistakes cunningly suggested by some evil willers at least; 2 Cor. 2. 17.

POSTSCRIPT

That we do own a Magistratical power for the governing of this our English Nation, to be determined in a just Parliamentary way; and that we ought to pray for good Governors, and good Government; that we may live a peaceable and godly life in all honesty; standing ready at all times, as necessity may require, to vindicate such a Magistracy or Magistrates, not only with arguments of sound reason, but also with our Estates and Lives; that Righteousness may reigne, and Vice may be overthrown, without respect of persons.

FINIS

THE TRUE GOSPEL-FAITH DECLARED ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES

I.

First, I believe there is but one God, 1 Cor. 8.6 But to us there is but one God. See 2 Kings 19.15 Mark 12.42, who is eternal, invisible, the onely wise God etc. Rev. 15.3 Great and marvellous are thy works Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways. Psalm 145.9. The Lord is good to all, who is present in every place beholding the evil and the good, Acts 15.18. Known to the Lord are all his works from the beginning of the world. John 6. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not and who should betray him. See also Heb. 4.13. Who made Heaven, Earth, the Seas and all that is in them, Acts 17.14. God made the world and all things therein. See Rev. 14.7 Jonah 1.9 John 1.3 Col. 1.15,16. And made man upright, Eccles. 7.29. This onely have I found that God made man upright and gave him power to rule over all creatures on the earth, Gen. 9.2. The fear and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth; giving him a good law to keep Gen. 2.17. But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat; telling him he should die if he kept it not, Gen. 2.17. In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

II.

Secondly, that man broke that law and brought death upon himself and all his posteritie, Rom. 5.12. Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so by death passed on all men, for that all have sinned.

III.

Thirdly, that no man can redeem himself from this death, Psalm 47.7. None of them can by any means redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom for him, Ephes. 2.6. For by grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves.

IV.

That God out of his love sent his son into the world to be born of a woman, to

die for the sins of all men under the first Covenant, John 3.16. For God so loved the world, that he sent his only begotten son etc. Ga. 4.4. God sent forth his son made of a woman, made under the law to redeem them under the law, Heb. 2.9. That he by the grace of God should taste death for every man, Heb. 9.15. That by means of death for the redemption of the transgressors, that were under the first Testament.

V.

That he did do the will of his Father, in laying down his life for all sinners, Phil. 2.8. And being found in the fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross 1 Tim. 2.6, who gave himself a ransom for all.

VI.

That he rose again from the dead the third day, and was seen bodily by his Disciples, Luke 24.67; Luke 29.39.

VII.

That he ascended bodily into Heaven, Acts 1.9; Eph. 4.10.

VIII.

That he is now a Priest, a Prophet and a King, Heb. 4.24; Act 3.22; Rev. 19.16.

IX.

That he hath given down the Holy Spirit to his Servants, that they might make known to all Nations the things that concern the Name of Jesus and the Kingdom of Heaven Acts 2.4; 2 Cor. 3.6; Acts 28.31.

X.

That all ought to believe the things declared by the Spirit Acts 17.30; Rom 16.26.

XI.

That they that believe the things so preached ought to be dipped in water, Acts 10.47. Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized (which in English is Dipped) which have received the Holy Spirit as well as we? Acts 10.43; Acts 2.41; Acts 8.12.

XII.

That God gives his Spirit to believers dipped through the prayer of faith and laying on of hands, Acts 8.15; Acts 8.17; Acts 5.32; Ephes. 1.13,14.

XIII.

That God gave his Spirit to believers dipped through the prayer of faith and laying on of hands, Acts 8.15; Acts 8.17; Acts 5.32; Ephes. 1.13,14.

XIV.

That every believer dipped is to be joyned with believers dipped which is the Church of Christ, Acts 2.41; 1 Cor. 12.13; 1 Pet. 2.5; Acts 2.42.

XV.

That this company of believers dipped are subject to afflictions, 2 Tim. 3.12; John 6.33.

XVI.

That everyone of them ought to be holy in life and conversation, 2 Cor. 7.1; 1 Pet. 1.15.

XVII.

That they ought to meet together to break bread, Acts 20.7; Lk. 2.19.

XVIII.

That they ought to be frequent in prayer, Rom. 12.12; Ephes. 1.18; Luke 18.1:21,36.

XIX.

That they ought to be obedient to the Magistrates in all things that are right, Rom.13.1; 1 Pet. 2.13,14.

XX.

That they ought to relieve the poor, that none want amongst them, except all want, they being diligent in their callings, Rom.12.13; Luke 3.11.

XXI.

That it is the dutie of every one to tell his brother of his sin, seeing him to offend, Matt. 18.15; Lev. 19.17.

XXII.

That they ought to cast out from among themselves all that walk disorderly, after admonition, they remaining obstinate, 1 Cor. 5.11; 1 Cor. 5.13; Titus 3.10.

XXIII.

That they have power to choose Messengers, Pastors, and Teachers from among themselves, Acts 1.21, 22; Acts 1.26; Titus 1.5; Acts 6.3.

XXIV.

That they are to be chosen by fasting and prayer, with the laying on of hands, Acts 13.3; Acts 6.6.

XXV.

That the church is to assist them in the work they appoint them to do, with things needful, 1 Cor. 9.14; Rom. 15.27; Gal. 6.6.

XXVI.

That every member ought to exercise his gift for the benefit of others, Matth. 25.27; 1 Pet. 4.10.

XXVII.

That all ought to avoid the hearing of any Teachers so as to learn of them, except believers dipped, and making of marriages with any out of the Church lest they be drawn from the truth. 2 John 10; 1 John 4.6; 1 Cor. 7.39; Deut. 7.3,4; 2 Cor. 6.14,15.

XXVIII.

That Christ shall come personally to raise the just and unjust from the dead, Acts 1.11; Heb. 9. 27; 1 Cor. 15.22.

XXIX.

That he shall judge every one according to his work 2 Cor. 5.10; Rom. 2.6.

XXX.

Whosoever believeth and is dipped, and abideth in the Commandments of God to the end, shall be saved, Mark 16.16; Matth. 24.13; Rev. 22.14.

XXXI.

That whosoever believeth not and walketh not in the Commandments of God to the end, shall be forever cast out from the presence of God into everlasting punishment, which is the second death, John 3. 36; Matth. 25.30; Matth. 25. 31; Rev. 21.8.

1655 MIDLAND CONFESSION OF FAITH

(Various Churches of the Midlands in England)

1st. We believe and profess, that there is only one true God, who is our God, who is eternal, almighty, unchangeable, infinite, and incomprehensible; who is a Spirit, having His being in Himself, and giveth being to all creatures; He doth what He will, in heaven and earth; working all things according to the counsel of His own will.

2nd. That this infinite Being is set forth to be the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three agree in one. 1 John 5. 7.

3rd. We profess and believe the Holy Scriptures, the Old and New Testament, to be the word and revealed mind of God, which are able to make men wise unto Salvation, through faith and love which is in Christ Jesus; and that they are given by inspiration of God, serving to furnish the man of God for every good work; and by them we are (in the strength of Christ) to try all things whatsoever are brought to us, under the pretence of truth. 2 Timothy 3.15-17; Isaiah 8.20.

4th. That though Adam was created righteous, yet he fell through the temptations of Satan; and his fall overthrew, not only himself, but his posterity, making them sinners by his disobedience; so that we are by nature children of wrath, and defiled from the womb, being shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin. Psalm ii.13; Romans 5.12-15.

5th. That God elected and chose, in His Eternal counsel, some persons to life and salvation, before the foundation of the world, whom accordingly He doth and will effectually call, and whom He doth so call, He will certainly keep by His power, through faith to salvation. Acts 13. 48; Ephesians 1. 2-4; 2 Thessalonians 2. 13; 1 Peter 1. 2, etc.

6th. That election was free in God, of His own pleasure, and not at all for, or with reference to , any foreseen works of faith in the creature, as the motive thereunto. Ephesians 1. 4; Romans 11.5, 6.

7th. That Jesus Christ was, in the fulness of time, manifested in the flesh; being born of a woman; being perfectly righteous, gave himself for the elect to redeem them to God by his blood. John 10. 15; Ephesians 5. 25-27; Rev. 5. 9.

8th. That all men until they be quickened by Christ are dead in trespasses -- Ephesians 2. 1; and therefore have no power of themselves to believe savingly -- John xv.5. But faith is the free gift of God, and the mighty work of God in the soul, even like the rising of Christ from the dead -- Ephesians 1. 19. Therefore consent not with those who hold that God hath given power to all men to believe to salvation.

9th. That Christ is the only true King, Priest, and Prophet of the Church. Acts 2. 22- 23; Hebrews 4. 14, etc; 8. 1, etc.

10th. That every man is justified by Christ -- Romans; 8. 33; 1 Cor. 6. 11; apprehended by faith; and that no man is justified in the sight of God partly by Christ and partly by works. Romans 3. 20, 28, 30; Gal. 5. 4.

11th. That Jesus of Nazareth, of whom the scriptures of the Old Testament prophesied, is the true Messiah and Saviour of men; and that He died on the cross, was buried, rose again in the same body in which He suffered and ascended to the right hand of the majesty on high, and appeareth in the presence of God, making intercession for us.

12th. That all those who have faith wrought in their hearts by the power of God, according to his good pleasure, should be careful to maintain good works, and to abound in them, acting from principles of true faith and unfeigned love, looking to God's glory as their main end. Titus 3. 8; Heb. 11. 6; 1 Cor. 6. 10 and 31.

13th. That those who profess faith in Christ, and make the same appear by their fruits, are the proper subjects of Baptism. Matthew 28. 18,19.

14th. That this baptizing is not by sprinkling, but dipping of the persons in the water, representing the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Romans 6. 3, 4; Colossians 2. 12; Acts 8. 38, 39.

15th. That persons so baptized ought, by free consent, to walk together, as God shall give opportunity in distinct churches, or assemblies of Zion, continuing in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, breaking of bread and prayers, as fellow-men caring for one another, according to the will of God. All these ordinances of Christ are enjoined in His Church, being to be observed till his Second Coming, which we all ought diligently to wait for.

16th. That at the time appointed of the Lord, the dead bodies of all men, just and unjust, shall rise again out of their graves, that all may receive according

to what they have done in their bodies, be it good or evil.

A CONFESSION OF THE FAITH
OF SEVERAL
CHURCHES OF CHRIST

In the County of Somerset, and of some Churches
in the Counties neer adjacent.

1 Peter iii. 15.

*Sanctifie the Lord God in your hearts, and be ready alwaies
to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of
the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.*

Matthew x. 32.

*Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will
I confess also before my Father, which is in heaven.*

Isaiah viii. 20.

*To the Law and to the Testimony, if they speak not according
to this rule it is because there is no light in them.*

Acts xvii. 11.

*These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that
they received the word with all readiness of minde, and
searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.*

London, Printed by Henry Hills, and are to be sold by Thomas Brewster,
at the three Bibles at the West end of Pauls, 1656. August 10.

A CONFESSION of the FAITH of several congregations of Christ in the
county of Somerset, and some churches in the counties near adjacent.

Printed at London, Anno

1656.

I.

WE believe that there is but one God (1 Cor. 8:6.), who is immortal, eternal, invisible, only wise (1 Tim. 1:17.), holy (Lev. 11:44.), almighty (Gen. 17:1.) infinite (1 Kings 8:27; Isa. 40:28; Ps. 147:5); a Spirit (John 4:24.), glorious in holiness (Ex. 15:11), just, merciful, gracious, long-suffering, abundant in mercy and truth (Ex. 34:6, 7.), faithful in all things (Deut. 7:9.).

II.

THAT this God, who is so in himself, did according to his own will in time, create all things, by, and for Jesus Christ (Heb. 1:2; Col. 1:16; John 2:3); who is the word of God (John 1:1) and upholds all things by the word of his power (Heb. 1:3.).

III.

THAT God made man after his own image (Gen. 1:27), in an estate of uprightness and human perfection (Eccles. 7:29.),

IV.

THAT God gave Adam a just law, requiring obedience under the penalty of death (Gen. 2:17), which law he brake, and brought himself and his posterity under the guilt and judgment denounced (Gen. 3:6; Rom. 5:12, 17, 18, 19.).

V.

MAN being in this undone estate, God did in the riches of his mercy hold forth Christ in a promise (Gen. 3:15.).

VI.

THAT in process of time God gave forth his laws by the hand of Moses (Exod. 20; John 1:17), to fallen man (Gal. 3:19), not for justification to eternal life (Gal. 3:17; Rom. 3:20.), but that all might appear guilty before the Lord by it (Rom. 3:19; 5:20).

VII.

THAT out of this condition none of the sons of Adam were able to deliver themselves (Rom. 8:3; Eph. 2:1, 5; Rom. 5:6.).

VIII.

THAT God continued and renewed the manifestation of his grace and mercy in Christ after the first promise made (Gen. 3), in other promises (Gen. 22:18

with Gen. 12:3; Gal. 3:16.); and in types, as the passover (Exod. 12:8 and ver. 13 with 1 Cor. 5:7.), and the brazen serpent (Numb. 21:9 compared with John 3:14); with the ministry and ministration of Moses and Aaron, the sacrifices, &c. being all figures of Christ (Heb. 7:8 and Chap. 9.); and in prophecies (as Isa. 9:6; 11:1, 2; 53:6 compared with 1 Pet. 2:24; I Cor. 15:3.).

IX.

THAT God in his son did freely, without respect to any work done, or to be done by them as a moving cause, elect and choose some to himself before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:3, 4; 2 Tim. 1:9.), whom he in time hath, doth, and will call, justify, sanctify and glorify (Rom. 8:29, 30).

X.

THAT those that were thus elected and chosen in Christ were by nature (before conversion) children of wrath even as others (Eph. 2:3; Rom. 3:9.).

XI.

THAT those that are chosen of God, called and justified, shall never finally fall from him, but being born from above are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation (John 6:39; 10:28; 11:26; 1 Pet. 1:5; Ps. 89:30, 31, 32, 33, 34; 1 John 3:9; John 14:19; Heb. 12:2; Jer. 31:3; John 10:29; Ps. 37:28; Jer. 32:40; Rom. 8:39; 1 Cor. 1:8, 9; Rom. 8:30; Ps. 48:14.).

XII.

THAT when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman (Gal. 4:4, 5.) according to the promises and prophecies of the scriptures; who was conceived in the womb of Mary the virgin by the power of the Holy Spirit of God, (Luke 1:35; Matt. 1:20.), and by her born in Bethlehem (Matt. 2:11; Luke 2:6, 7.).

XIII.

WE believe that Jesus Christ is truly God (Isa. 9:6; Heb. 1:8; Rom. 9:5.) and truly man, of the seed of David (1 Tim. 2:5; Acts 13:23; Rom. 1:3.).

XIV.

THAT after he came to be about thirty years of age, being baptized, he manifested himself to be the Son of God (Luke 3:21, 23 with John 2:7, 11.), the promised Messiah, by doing such works both in his life and in his death which were proper unto, and could be done by none but the Son of God, the

true Messiah (John 1:49; 6:9, &c.).

XV.

THAT this man Christ Jesus suffered death under Pilate, at the request of the Jews (Luke 23:24.), bearing the sins of his people on his own body on the cross (1 Pet. 2:24), according to the will of God (Isa. 53:6), being made sin for us, (2 Cor. 5:11) and so was also made a curse for us (Gal. 3:13, 14; 1 Pet. 3:18.), that we might be made the righteousness of God in him (2 Cor. 5:11), and by his death upon the cross, he hath obtained eternal redemption and deliverance for his church. (Col 1:14; Eph. 1:7; Acts 20:28; Heb. 9:12; 1 Pet 1:18, 19.).

XVI.

THAT this same Jesus having thus suffered death for our sins, was buried (Matt. 27:59, 60.), and was also raised by the power of God (Eph. 1:19.) the third day according to the scriptures (1 Cor. 15:3, 4.), for our justification (Rom.4:25.).

XVII.

THAT after he had been seen forty days upon the earth, manifesting himself to his disciples (Acts 1:3.), he ascended into the heavens (Acts 1:9, 10, 11; Heb. 4:14.), and is set on the right hand of the throne of God (Heb. 8:1; Heb. 1:3.), whom the heavens must receive until the time of the Restitution of all things. (Acts 3:21.).

XVIII.

THAT the Father having thus exalted him, and given him a name above every name (Phil. 2:9.), and hath made him who is mediator (1 Tim. 2:5), priest (Heb. 10:21; 8:1), prophet (Acts 3:22.), and king to his people (Ps. 2:6; Rev. 15:3.). As he is our priest, so is he our peace and reconciliation (Eph. 2:14, 15; Rom. 5:9, 10.), and being entered into the holy place, even heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of God (Heb. 9:24.), making continual intercession for us (Heb. 7:24, 25.), he is become our advocate (1 John 2:1.) by whom we have boldness and access unto the throne of grace with acceptance (Heb. 10:19; Eph. 3:12; Heb. 4:16.). As he is our prophet, so he hath given us the scriptures, the Old and New Testament, as a rule and direction unto us both for faith and practice (John 5:39; 1 Pet. 1:10, 11, 12; 2 Tim. 3:16; 1 Pet. 1:20, 21; Eph. 2:20; 1 Cor. 14:37; Tit. 1:2, 3.); and that he

hath sent, doth and will (according to his promise) send his Holy Spirit the Comforter, by whom he leadeth us into all truth (John 14:26; 16:13.); and by his continual presence with us, and in us (John 14:16, 17.), teaching, opening and revealing the mysteries of the kingdom, and will of God unto us (1 Cor. 2:10, 11, 12, 13; Rev. 2:29; 5:5.), giving gifts in his church for the work of the ministry, and edifying the body of Christ (Eph. 4:8, 12; 1 Cor. 12:4, 5, 6.), that through the powerful teachings of the Lord, by his Spirit in his church, they might grow up in him (Eph. 4:15.), be conformed to his will (Ezek. 36:27; 1 Pet. 1:2.), and sing praises unto his name (Heb. 2:12; 1 Cor. 14:15.). And as he is our prophet, and king, lord, and law-giver (Isa. 33:22; 55:4.), Prince of life (Acts 3:15.), Prince of peace (Isa. 9:6.), Master of his people (Matt. 23:8.), Head of his church (Col. 1:18.), the Almighty (Rev. 1:8.), so he hath given rules unto us, by the which he ruleth over us (Luke 6:46; John 10:16; 1 John 2:4; John 14:15; Matt. 28:20.), and ruleth over all things for his church (Eph. 1:22; Rev. 19:16.) and by the power of love ruleth by his Spirit in us (2 Cor. 5:14; 1 John 2:5.), making us (in a measure) both able and willing to honour him (Phil. 4:3; Heb. 13:21; Eph. 6:10; Phil. 2:13), and bow before him (Ps. 95:6; 110:3; Rev. 4: 10, 11.), submitting ourselves to him alone in all his commands with joy (John 15:14; Rev. 14:4; 7:15; Ps. 119:2, 47; Rev. 15:3, 4.).

XIX.

THAT the Spirit is administred by or through the word of faith preached (Gal. 3:2) which word was first declared by the Lord himself, and was confirmed by them that heard him (Heb. 2:3.), which word is called the gospel of God's grace (Acts 20:24.), the word of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:19.), the sword of the Spirit (Eph. 6:17.), the weapon of a Christian (2 Cor. 10:4.); a faithful (Rev. 22:6.), quick, powerful (Heb. 4:12.), plain (Prov. 8: 9.), comfortable (Rom. 15:4.), pure (Ps. 12:6.), right, true (Ps. 33:4.), sound (Tit. 2:8.), and wholesome word (1 Tim. 6:3.).

XX.

THAT this spirit of Christ, being administer'd by the word of faith, worketh in us faith in Christ (John 3: 5; 1 Pet. 1:22 Acts 16:14; Gal. 5:22.) by virtue of which we come to receive our sonship (John 1:12; Gal. 3:26.), and is further administer'd unto us through faith in the promises of God (Eph. 1:13; Acts 2:38, 39; Acts 1:4.), waiting on him in those ways and means that he hath

appointed in his word (John 14:15, 16, 17; Luke 11:9, 13.), this faith being the ground of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen (Heb. 11:1.).

XXI.

THAT justification is God's accounting and declaring that man justified from the guilt and condemnation of all his sin, who hath received Jesus Christ and doth believe in him (in truth and power) according to the record given of him by God in scripture (Rom. 4: 5; 1 John 5:10, 11; Joh. 3:36.).

XXII.

THAT justification from the guilt and condemnation of sin is only obtained through faith in that man Jesus Christ, crucified at Jerusalem, and by God raised from the dead (Rom. 5:1, 9; Acts 13:38, 39; Rom. 4:25; 10:9.). And that those who bring in any other way of justification, do therein make void, and acquit themselves of having any interest in the gospel and grace of Christ (Gal. 2:21; 5:4.).

XXIII.

THAT this faith being wrought in truth and power, it doth not only interest us in our justification, sonship, and glory, but it produceth as effects and fruits, a conformity, in a measure, to the Lord Jesus, in his will, graces and virtues (Rom. 5:3, 4; 1 John 3:23, 24; 2 Pet. 1:5, 6, 7; Gal. 5:6; Acts 26:18; 1 Thess 1:3.).

XXIV.

THAT it is the duty of every man and woman, that have repented from dead works, and have faith towards God, to be baptized (Acts 2:38; 8:12, 37, 38.), that is, dipped or buried under the water (Rom. 6:3, 4; Col. 2:12.), in the name of our Lord Jesus (Acts 8:16.), or in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19.), therein to signify and represent a washing away of sin (Acts 22:16.), and their death, burial, and resurrection with Christ (Rom. 6:5; Col. 2:12.), and being thus planted in the visible church or body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:3.), who are a company of men and women separated out of the world by the preaching of the gospel (Acts 2:41; 2 Cor. 6:17.), do walk together in communion in all the commandments of Jesus (Acts 2:42.), wherein God is glorified and their souls comforted (2 Thes. 1:11, 12; 2 Cor. 1:4.).

XXV.

THAT we believe some of those commandments further to be as followeth.

1. CONSTANCY in prayer (Col. 2:23, 24.).
2. BREAKING of bread (1 Cor. 11:23, 24.).
3. GIVING of thanks (Eph. 5:20.).
4. WATCHING over one another (Heb. 12:15.).
5. CARING one for another (1 Cor. 12:25) by visiting one another, especially in sickness and temptations (Matt. 25:36.).
6. EXHORTING one another (Heb. 3:13.).
7. DISCOVERING to each other, and bearing one another's burdens (Gal. 6:2.).
8. LOVING one another (Heb. 13:1.).
9. REPROVING when need is one another (Matt. 18:15.).
10. SUBMITTING one to another in the Lord (1 Pet. 5:5.).
11. ADMINISTERING one to another according to the gift received, whether it be in spirituals, or temporals (1 Pet. 4:10.).
12. THE offender to seek reconciliation, as well as the offended (Matt. 5:23, 24.).
13. LOVE our enemies and persecutors, and pray for them (Matt. 5:23, 24.).
14. EVERY one to work if he be able, and none to be idle (2 Thes. 3:10, 11, 12.).
15. THE women in the church to learn in silence, and in all subjection (1 Tim. 2:11; 1 Cor. 14:37.).
16. PRIVATE admonition to a brother offending another; and if not prevailing, to take one or two more; if he hear not them, then to tell it to the church; and if he hear not them, to be accounted as an heathen and publican (Matt. 18:15.).
17. PUBLICK rebuke to publick offenders (1 Tim. 5:20.).
18. THE brethren in ministring forth their gifts, ought to do it decently and in order, one by one, that all may learn and all may be comforted (1 Cor. 14:31,

40.).

19. A SPECIAL care to assemble together, that their duty to God, and the church may not be neglected (Heb. 10:24, 25.).

20. AND all things in the church, done in the name and power of the head, the Lord Christ Jesus (Col. 3:7.).

21. THAT in admitting of members into the church of Christ, it is the duty of the church, and ministers whom it concerns, in faithfulness to God, that they be careful they receive none but such as do make forth evident demonstration of the new birth, and the work of faith with power (John 3:3; Matt. 3:8, 9; Acts 8:37; Ezek. 44:6, 7, Acts 2:38; 2 Cor. 9:14; Ps. 26:4, 5; 101:7.).

XXVI.

THAT those that truly repent, and believe, and are baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, are in a fit capacity to exercise faith, in full assurance to receive a greater measure of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38, 39; Eph. 1:13.).

XXVIII. (Sic Original)

THAT it is the duty of the members of Christ in the order of the gospel, tho' in several congregations and assemblies (being one in the head) if occasion be, to communicate each to other, in things spiritual, and things temporal (Rom. 15:26; Acts 11:29; 15:22; 11:22.).

XXIX.

THAT the Lord Christ Jesus being the foundation and corner stone of the gospel church whereon his apostles built (Eph. 2:20; Heb. 2:3), He gave them power and abilities to propagate, to plant, to rule and order (Matt. 28:19, 20; Luke 10:16), for the benefit of that his body, by which ministry he did shew forth the exceeding riches of his grace, by his kindness towards it in the ages to come (Eph. 2:7), which is according to his promise (Matt. 28:20.)

XXX.

THAT this foundation and ministration aforesaid, is a sure guide, rule and direction, in the darkest time of the anti-christian apostacy, or spiritual Babylonish captivity, to direct, inform, and restore us in our just freedom and liberty, to the right worship and order belonging to the church of Jesus Christ (1 Tim. 3:14, 15; 2 Tim. 3:15, 16, 17; John 17:20; Isa. 59:21; Rev. 2:24; Isa.

40:21; Rev. 2:5; 1 Cor. 14:37; Rev. 1:3 2 Thes. 3:14; Rev. 2: 11; 1 Pet. 1:25; 1 John 4:6; 2 Pet. 1:15, 16; Isa. 58: 11, 12; 2 Pet. 3:2; Isa. 8:20.).

XXXI.

THAT the church of Jesus Christ with its ministry may from among themselves, make choice of such members, as are fitly gifted and qualified by Christ, and approve and ordain such by fasting, prayer, and laying on of hands (Acts 13:3; 14:23.), for the performance of the several duties, whereunto they are called (Acts 20:28; Rom, 12:6, 7, 8; 2 Tim. 4:2; Acts 6:3.).

XXXII.

THAT such a ministry labouring in the word and doctrine, have a power to receive a livelihood of their brethren, whose duty it is to provide a comfortable subsistence for them, if they be able, to whom for Christ's sake they are servants (1 Cor. 9:4,7; 1 Tim. 5:17, 18.). Yet it is commendable in cases of necessity, for them, for example sake, and that they may be able to support the weak, to labour and work with their hands (Acts 20: 24, 25.).

XXXIII.

THAT the authority of Christ in an orderly ministry in his church, is to be submitted unto (Heb. 13: 17; 2 Thes. 3: 14.).

XXXIV.

THAT as it is an ordinance of Christ, so it is the duty of his church in his authority, to send forth such brethren as are fitly gifted and qualified through the Spirit of Christ to preach the gospel to the world (Acts 13:1, 2, 3; 11:22; 8:14.).

XXXV.

THAT it is the duty of us believing Gentiles, not to be ignorant of that blindness that yet lieth on Israel, that none of us may boast (Rom. 11:25.), but to have bowels of love and compassion to them, praying for them (Rom. 10:1.), expecting their calling, and so much the rather, because their conversion will be to us life from the dead (Rom. 11: 15.).

XXXVI.

THAT it is the will of the Lord, and it is given to the saints not only to believe in him, but to suffer for his name (John 16:13; Phil. 1:26.) and so to

pass through many tribulations into the kingdom of God (Acts 14: 22; 2 Tim. 3:12; 2:12.).

XXXVII.

THAT the angels of the Lord are ministring spirits, sent forth for the good of those that shall be the heirs of salvation (Heb. 1:14; Ps. 91:11, 12; Acts 27:23; Luke 22:43.).

XXXVIII.

THAT the wicked angels (Ps. 78: 49.) kept not their first estate in which they were created (Jude 6.), the prince of whom is called the devil (Matt. 8: 28.), and the great dragon, and the old serpent, and satan (Rev. 12:9.), and the accuser of our brethren (Rev. 12:10.), and the prince of this world (John 14:30.), and a prince that ruleth in the air; a spirit working in the children of disobedience (Eph. 2: 2.), and our adversary (1 Pet. 5:8.), whose children the wicked are (Matt. 13:39; John 8:44.) To him we ought not to give place (Eph. 4:27.), whose power Christ hath overcome for us (Heb. 2: 14.), and for him and his angels everlasting fire is prepared (Matt. 25:41.).

XXXIX.

THAT it is our assured expectation, grounded upon promises, that the Lord Jesus Christ shall the second time appear without sin unto salvation, unto his people, to raise and change the vile bodies of all his saints, to fashion them like unto his glorious body, and so to reign with him, and judge over all nations on the earth in power and glory (Phil. 3:20, 21; Heb. 9:28; Acts 3:19,20, 21; Matt. 19:28; Rev. 2:26, 27; 1 Cor. 6:2; Ps. 72:8, 11; Dan. 7:27; Zech. 14:9; PS. 2:8, 9; Jer. 23:5, 6; Ezek. 21:26, 27; Isa. 32:1; Rev. 11:15; Ps. 82:8; Rev. 5:9, 10; 20:6.).

XL.

THAT there is a day appointed, when the Lord shall raise the unjust as well as the righteous, and judge them all in righteousness (John 5:28, 29; Acts 24:15.), but every man in his own order (1 Cor. 15:23; 1 Thes. 4:16.), taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose punishment will be everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord (2 Thes. 1:7, 8, 9, 10; Jude 14, 15; Rev. 20:11, 12, 13, 14.).

XLI.

THAT there is a place into which the Lord will gather all his elect, to enjoy him for ever, usually in scripture called heaven (2 Cor. 5:1; John 14:2, 3.).

XLII.

THAT there is a place into which the Lord will cast the devil, his angels and wicked men, to be tormented for ever, from his presence and the glory of his power, usually in scripture called hell (Mark 9:43, 44, 45; Ps. 9:17; Matt. 25:41; 10:28; 23:33; Luke 10:15; 16:23.).

XLIII.

THAT it is both the duty and privilege of the church of Christ (till his coming again) in their fellowship together in the ordinances of Christ, to enjoy, prize, and press after, fellowship through and in the Spirit with the Lord, and each with other (Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 11:26; Eph. 2:21,22; Eph. 4:3,4, 5, 6; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 3: 9; Col. 2:2), which we believe to be attained through the exercise of faith in the death, resurrection, and life of Christ (2 Cor. 5:14, 15, 16; Col. 2:12; Phil. 3:9, 10, 11; 1 Pet. 2:5.).

XLIV.

THAT the ministry of civil justice (being for the praise of them that do well, and punishment of evildoers) is an ordinance of God, and that it is the duty of the saints to be subject thereunto not only for fear, but for conscience sake (Rom. 13:1, 2, 3, 4, 5; 1 Pet. 2:13, 14.) and that for such, prayers and supplications are to be made by the saints (1 Tim. 2: 1, 2.).

XLV.

THAT nothing doth come to pass by fortune or chance, but all things are disposed by the hand of God, and all for good to his people (Gen. 45:5; 50:20; Rom. 8:28; Eph. 1:11; Job 14:5; Isa.4:5,7.).

XLVI.

AND that a church so believing, and so walking, though despised, and of low esteem, is no less in the account of her Lord and King, than though:

BLACK, yet comely, Cant. 1:5.

FAIREST, without spots Cant. 4:7.

PRECIOUS, Isa. 43:4.

BEAUTIFUL, Cant. 7:1.

HOLY, without blemish, Eph. 5:27.

PLEASANT, Cant. 1:15.

WHOSE soul loveth Christ, Cant. 1:7.

RUNNERS after Christ, Cant. 1:4.

HONOURABLE, Isa. 43:4.

THE desire of Christ, Cant. 7:10.

COMPLEAT in Christ, Col. 2:10.

LOVERS of the Father, John 16:27.

THE blessed of the Father, Matt. 25:34.

KEPT by the Lord, 1 Pet. 1:5; Isa. 27:3.

GRAVEN on the palms of his hands, Isa. 49:16.

TENDER to the Lord as the apple of his eye, Zech. 2:8.

TAUGHT of the Lord, Isa. 54:13.

ONE that hath obtained mercy, 1 Pet. 2:10.

ONE that hath a redemption, Eph. 1:7.

THE gates of hell shall not prevail against it, Matt. 16:18.

IN that church be glory unto God by Jesus Christ, throughout all ages
world without end. Amen. Eph. 2:21.

1757 DECLARATION OF THE FAITH AND PRACTICE OF THE CHURCH IN CARTER LANE, SOUTHWARK

(based on the 1729 GOAT YARD DECLARATION OF FAITH)
in the pastoral care of Mr. John Gill, &c.

Having been enabled, through divine Grace to give up ourselves to the Lord, and likewise to one another by the will of God, we account it as incumbent upon us to make a declaration of our faith and practice, to the honour of Christ, and the glory of His name; knowing, that as with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, so with the mouth confession is made unto salvation; which is declared as follows.

- 1. We believe,** That the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, are the Words of God, and the only rule of faith and practice.
- 2. We believe,** That there is but one only living and true God; that there three Persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, Who are equal in nature, power, and glory; and that the Son and the Holy Ghost are as truly and properly God as the Father. These three Divine Persons are distinguished from each other by peculiar relative properties. The distinguishing character and relative property of the First Person is begetting; He has begotten a Son of the same nature with Him, and Who is the express image of His Person; and therefore is with great propriety called the Father. The distinguishing character and relative property of the Second Person is that He is begotten, and He is called the Only Begotten of the Father, and His own proper Son; not a Son by creation as angels and men are, nor by adoption as saints are, nor by office as civil magistrates are, but by nature, by the Father's eternal generation of Him in the divine nature; and therefore He is truly called the Son. The distinguishing character and relative property of the third person is to be breathed by the Father and the Son, and to proceed from Both, and is very properly called the Spirit or Breath of both. These three distinct Divine Persons, we profess to reverence, serve and worship as the one true God.
- 3. We believe,** That before the world began, God did elect a certain number of men unto everlasting salvation; whom He did predestinate to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ of His own free grace, and according to the good

pleasure of His will; and that in pursuance of this gracious design, He did contrive and make a covenant of grace and peace with His son Jesus Christ, on behalf of those persons, with all their grace and glory, were put into the hands of Christ, and made His care and charge.

4. We believe, That God created the first man Adam, after His image, and in His likeness, an upright, holy, innocent creature, capable of serving and glorifying Him, but he sinning, all his posterity sinned in him, and came short of the glory of God; the guilt of whose sin is imputed; and a corrupt nature derived to all his off-spring descending from him by ordinary and natural generation; that they are by their first birth carnal and unclean; averse to all that is good, incapable of doing any, and prone to every sin; and are also by nature children of wrath and under sentence of condemnation, and so are subject, not only to a corporal death, and involved in a moral one, commonly called spiritual, but are also liable to an eternal death, as considered in the first Adam, fallen and sinners; from all which there is no deliverance, but by Christ the second Adam.

5. We believe, That the Lord Jesus Christ, being set up from everlasting as mediator of the covenant, and He having engaged to be surety of His people did in the fullness of time really assume human nature, and not before neither in whole nor in part; His human soul being a creature, existed not from eternity, but was created and formed in His body by Him that formed the spirit of man within Him, when He was conceived in the womb of the virgin; and so His human nature consists of a true body and a reasonable soul, both which, together, and at once the Son of God assumed into union with His Divine Person, when made of a woman and not before, in which He really suffered and died as the substitute of His people, in their room and stead; whereby He made all that satisfaction for their sins which the law and justice of God could require, as well as made way for all those blessings which are needful for them both for time and eternity.

6. We believe, That the eternal Redemption which Christ has obtained by the shedding of His blood is special and particular, that is to say that it was only intentionally designed for the Elect of God, and Sheep of Christ, who only share the special and peculiar blessings of it.

7. We believe, That the justification of God's Elect is only by the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, without the consideration of any works of

righteousness done by them; and that the full and free pardon of all their sins and transgressions, past, present and to come, is only through the blood of Christ according to the riches of his grace.

8. We believe, That the work of regeneration, conversion, sanctification and faith is not an act of man's free will and power, but of the mighty, efficacious and irresistible grace of God.

9. We believe, That all those who are chosen by the Father, redeemed by the Son, and sanctified by the Spirit, shall certainly persevere, so that not one of them shall ever perish but shall have everlasting life.

10. We believe, That there shall be a Resurrection of the dead, both the of the just and the unjust; and that Christ will come a second time to judge both the quick and the dead; when He will take vengeance on the wicked, and introduce His own people into His Kingdom and Glory, where they shall be forever with Him.

11. We believe, That Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of Christ, to be continued until His second coming; and that the former is absolutely requisite to the latter; that is to say, that those only are admitted into the communion of the church, and to participate of all the ordinances in it, who upon profession of their faith, have been baptised by immersion, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

12. We believe, That singing of Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs vocally is an ordinance of the Gospel to be performed by believers, but that as to time, place, and manner, everyone ought to be left to their liberty in using it.

Now all each of these doctrines and ordinances we look upon ourselves under the greatest obligation to embrace, maintain and defend; believing it is our duty to stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the Gospel.

And whereas we are very sensible that our conversation, both in the world and the church, ought to be as becometh the Gospel of Christ, we judge it our incumbent duty, to walk in wisdom toward them that are without, to exercise a conscience void of offence toward God and men, by living soberly, righteously and godly in this present world.

And as to our regards to each other in our church communion, we esteem it our duty to walk with each other in all humility and brotherly love; to watch

over each other's conversation; to stir up one another to love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as we have opportunity, to worship God according to His revealed will; and when the case requires, to warn, rebuke and admonish one another, according to the rules of the Gospel.

Moreover, we think ourselves obliged to sympathise with each other in all conditions, both inward and outward, which God, in His providence, may bring us into; as also to bear with one another's weakness, failings and infirmities; and particularly to pray for one another and that the Gospel, and the ordinances thereof, might be blessed to the edification and comfort of each other's souls, and for the gathering in of others to Christ, besides those who are already gathered.

All which duties we desire to be sound in performance of, through the gracious assistance of the Holy Spirit; whilst we both admire and adore the grace which has given us a place and a name in God's house, better than that of sons and daughters. Isa. 56; 5.