A

CONFESSION OF FAITH

Of the several Congregations or Churches of Christ in LONDON, which are commonly (though Unjustly) called

ANABAPTISTS.

PUBLISHED,

For the Vindication of the truth, and Information of the ignorant; likewise for the taking off of those aspersions which are frequently, both in Pulpit, and Print unjustly cast upon them.

UNTO WHICH IS ADDED,

HEART BLEEDINGS FOR Professors Abominations.

OR

A faithful general Epistle (from the same Churches) presented to all who have known the way of truth, forewarning them to flee security, and careless walking Under the Profession of the same, discovering some of Satan wiles, whereby also, wanton persons and their ungodly ways are disclaimed.

But this I confess unto thee, that after the way they call heresy, so worship I the God of my Fathers, believing 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 the unjust,

Acts 24. 14,15.

For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen, and heard,

Acts 4.20.

The third Impression corrected.

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THE EPISTLE TO THE READER.

COURTEOUS READER,

There is nothing wherein saints should be more conversant than in promoting the honor of the Lord and His Christ, striving and studying to walk before Him agreeable to the truth recorded in His world; the consideration of which is a strong inducement unto us to engage (to the uttermost of our abilities) in this work, that when other men content themselves by living below the rule, we may strive to walk close thereunto (suitable to the pattern left us by God in His word); and when many account it their glory to turn their backs upon what they profess to have received from Christ, we may strive to honor God, by a steadfast continuance in what we have seen and heard from him, the weight of which at first prevailed upon us to declare unto the world this our **Confession of Faith** and **Faithful Epistle**, which we have again reprinted, and made public for the reasons following:--

First, The invitations and earnest solicitations of several of our brethren, from all parts of the nation, whose hearts long to behold (in public) our stability and perseverance in the way and truth of our God, that by it they may have wherewith to put to silence those who have lately taken liberty to reproach and undervalue the truth professed by us.

Secondly, That the world may behold that through grace, (by which alone we stand) we are preserved from backsliding or revolting from the way and truth, we for some years have followed God in; in which (though faith and obedience) we
trust to be continued, unto the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, That we might prevent Satan and his accomplices in their enterprises, who have of late abounded more than ordinary with stratagems and inventions, to circumvent poor saints in their stability and love unto the truth; amongst which this was no small one (in several remote parts), that we had cast off all our former profession and practice, so that none remained together worshipping God in His way, owning themselves the churches of Christ, but were grown up to a further attainment and light (as they say) to live more immediately with God and Christ, than in such low, mean, and contemptible a way as ordinances, thinking thereby to stumble and dishearten many whose hearts were approved to God.

Fourthly, That we might take off prejudice from the hearts of those (many of which we have comfortable hopes) who are or may be prejudiced against us, from these many invectives and bitter unjust

reproaches, we are or may be (for worshipping God according to our conscience and the rule of truth) exposed unto, and they (if it be the good pleasure of our God) come to understand our practice, and subject themselves to the Lord in His commandments.

Lastly, The remembrance of what good this our understanding has formerly done, in the countries where it hath been spread (of which we had particular notice from several, whose hearts have been refreshed therewith), is no small inducement to us to bring this forth again in print.

Courteous friend! we desire thee soberly to weigh and consider what we have professed before men, and angels, out of the simplicity of our hearts, and let not prejudice prevent by profiting; but make it the great care and study to give up the understanding to love and receive the truth, as it is in Jesus, delighting thyself in that government, which is by His own hand established in His own house. Be not disheartened although thou should hear of the miscarriage of some, knowing that in many things we sin all, and come short of the grace of our God; nor if thou should be advertised of the falling away of any one, do but consider we live in the last ages of the world, wherein many shall depart from the truth (neither is it a new thing for men to relinquish their profession).

But strive thou to follow God fully, and to stand fast in the simplicity of the truth; and God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, be with thee, and be the guide and counselor.

Signed in the name, and by the appointment of the aforesaid several churches, meeting in LONDON.

William Kiffen,	Edward Harrison,
John Spilsbery,	Richard Graves,
Joseph Sanson,	Edward Roberts,
Hugh Gosnell,	Thomas Waters,
Thomas Pault,	Henry Forty,
Joseph Patshall,	Thomas Young,
William Conset,	John Watson.

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.1.

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 gives being, moving and preservation to all creatures.

I Cor. 8:6; Isa. 44:6, chap. 46:9; Exod. 3:14; I Tim. 6:16; Isa. 43:15; Psal. 147:5; Deut. 32:3; Job. 36:5; Jer. 10:12; Exod. 34:6,7; Acts 17:18; Rom. 11:30.

.2.

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.

I Cor. 1:3; Joh. 1:1, Chap. 15:26; Exod., 3:14; I Cor. 8:6.

.3.

God hath decreed in Himself, before the world was, concerning all things, to work, dispose, and bring them about (according to the counsel of His own will) to His glory: yet without being the 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; leaving the rest to act in their sin, to their just condemnation, and to the praise of his justice.

Isa. 46:10; Eph. 1:11; Rom. 11:23; Psa. 115: 3; & 135:6; Psal. 33:15; I Sam. 10:9 ,26; Prov. 21:6; Exod. 21:13; Prov. 16:33; Psal. 144; Isa. 45:7; Jer. 14:22; Mar. 6:28-30; Col. 1:16, 17; Nu. 23:19, 20; Rom. 3:4; Jer. 10:10; Eph. 1:4, 5; Jud. 4, 6; Prov. 10:4.

.4.

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 subjects of death, and other misery in this world, and forever, unless the Lord Jesus Christ sets them free.

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

.5.

God in His infinite power and wisdom, does dispose all things to the end for which they were created, that neither any thing 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; Mat. 10: 29,30; Exod. 21:13; Pro. 16:33; Rom. 8:28.

.6.

All the Elect being loved of God, with an everlasting love, are redeemed, quickened and saved, not by themselves, not their own works, least any man should boast, but only and wholly by God of His 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 rejoices might rejoice in the Lord.

Jer. 31:2; Ephes. 1:3, 7, chap. 2:8, 9; I Thes. 5:9; Acts 13:38; I Cor. 5:21; Jer. 9:23, 24; I Cor. 1:30, 31; Jer. 23:6.

.7.

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; I Thess. 1:8; Joh. 6:36.

.8.

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 traditions, but) only the word of God contained 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. 2:1, 2; Matt. 15:9; Joh. 5:39; 2 Tim. 3:15, 16, 17; Isa. 8:20; Gal. 1:8 ,9; Acts 3:22, 23.

.9.

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, &c. by Whom He made the world, Who upholds and governs all things that He hath made; Who also when the fullness 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. 3:1; Chap. 22:1 & 49:10;; Dan. 7:13; 9:24; 25:2: Prov. 8:2; Joh. 1:1,2, Heb. 1:8; Gal. 4:4; Heb. 7:14; Reve. 5:5 with Gen. 49:9,10; Rom. 1:3, and 9,10; Mat. 1:16; with Luke 3:23,26. Heb. 2:16; Isa. 52:3,4,5; Heb. 4:15.

.10.

Jesus Christ is made the Mediator of the new and everlasting Covenant of grace between God and man ever to be perfectly & fully the Prophet, Priest, and King of the Church of God for ever more.

I Tim. 2:4,5; Heb. 9:15; John 14:6,7; Isa. 9:6,7.

.11.

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

.12.

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 mere 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.

.13.

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.

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

.14.

This office to which Christ is called, is threefold, as 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 prophetical office. And 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, withhold and preserve us to His heavenly Kingdom.

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

.15.

Concerning the Prophesy 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 continues revealing the same truth of the Gospel to His people.

John 1:18, & 12:49, 50, & 51, & 17:8; Deut. 18:15; Matt. 23:10; Heb. 3:1; Mal. 3:1; I Cor. 1:24; Col. 2:3.

.16.

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 with Deut. 18:15; Heb. 1:1; That Jesus Christ is God is wonderful 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, I Tim. 3:16; The same is very God, I 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 forgives 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 Son He said, The Throne, O God is for ever and ever, Heb. 1:8; John 1:18; Acts 20:28; 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 13:25; 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 sanctifies, and they that are sanctified, are all of one, Heb. 2:11; See Acts 3:22; Deut. 18:15; Heb. 1:1.

.17.

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, &c. 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 Sacrifices acceptable to God through Him.

Neither does the Father accept, or Christ offer to the Father any other worship or worshipers.

John 17:19; Heb. 3:7, 8, 9 & 10, 11; Rom. 5:19; Eph. 5:2; Col. 1:20; Eph. 2:14, 15, 16; Rom. 8:34; Heb. 9:24, & 8:1; I Pet. 2:5; John 4:23, 24.

.18.

This Priesthood was not legal or temporary, but according to the Order of Melchisedec, and is stable and perfect, not for a time, but for ever, which is suitable to Jesus Christ, as to Him that ever lives: Christ was the Priest, Sacrifice, and Alter: 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 Alter according to His divine nature, it belonging to the Alter to sanctify that which is offered upon it, and so it ought to be of greater dignity than the sacrifice itself.

Heb. 7:17; Heb. 7:16 - 25; Heb. 5:6; Heb. 10:10; I 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.

.19.

Concerning His Kingly Office, Christ being risen from the dead, and ascended into heaven, and having all power in heaven and earth, He does spiritually govern His Church, and does exercise His power over all Angels and men, good and bad, to the preservation and salvation of the Elect, and to the over-ruling and destruction of His enemies. By His Kingly power, he applies the benefits, virtue, and fruits of His Prophesy 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 rules the vessels of wrath, using, limiting and restraining them as it seems good to His infinite wisdom.

I Cor. 15:4; I Pet. 3:21, 22; Matt. 28:18, 19, 20; 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; John 1:8; Rom. 1:21, 17, 18.

.20.

This His Kingly power shall be more fully manifested when He shall come in glory to reign among His Saints, when shall put down all rule & 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.

Eph. 4:17, 18; 2 Pet. 2; I Cor. 15: 24, 28; Heb. 9:28; 2 Thess. 1:9, 10; I Thess. 4: 15, 16, 17; John 17: 21, 26.

.21.

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

Eph. 1:14; Heb. 5:9; Matt. 1:21; John 17:6; Heb. 7:25; I Cor. 2:12; Rom. 8: 29,30; I John 5:12; John 15: 13; John 3:16.

.22.

Faith is the gift of God, wrought in the hearts of the elect, by the Spirit of God; by which they come to know and believe the truth of the Scriptures, and the excellency of them above all other writings, & 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 fullness of the Spirit in its workings and operations, and so are enabled to cast their souls upon this 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: 62.

.23.

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 nourishes 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; notwithstanding, though 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 enjoy their purchased possession, they being engraved upon the palms of His hands, and their names having been written in the book of life from all eternity.

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

.24.

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, does believe, and is converted by no less power then that which raised Christ from the dead.

Rom. 10:17; I Cor. 1:29; Rom. 9:19; Ezek. 16:16; Rom. 3:12; Rom. 1:16; Eph. 1:19; Col. 2:12.

.25.

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; I Tim. 1:15; Rom. 4:5; & 5:8; Acts 5:30, 31 & 2:36; I Cor. 1:22, 24.

.26.

The same power that converts to faith in Christ, caries 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.

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

.27.

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.

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

.28.

Those that have union with Christ, are justified from all their sins by the blood of Christ; which justification is a gracious and full acquaintance 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 is to be applied by the Spirit through believing.

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

.29.

All believers are a holy and sanctified people, and that sanctification is a special fruit of the new Covenant, and an effect of the love of God manifested in the soul, whereby the believer presses after a heavenly and Evangelical obedience to all the commands, which Christ as Head and King in the new Covenant hath prescribed to them.

I Cor. 1:1; I Pet. 2:9; Eph. 2:4; I John 4:16; Mat. 28:20.

.30.

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, and 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 the atonement.

2 Cor. 5:19; Rom. 5:9, 10; Isa. 54:10, & 26:12; Eph. 2:13, 14; Eph. 4:7; Rom. 5:10, 11.

.31.

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 predestinated, 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, 12, 13; Heb. 2:9, 10; 2 Tim. 3:12; Rom. 8:29; I Thess. 3:3; Gal. 2:19, 20; 2 Cor.5:7; Deut. 2:5.

.32.

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, and glory.

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

.33.

Jesus Christ hath here on earth a 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 the faith of the Gospel, being baptized into that faith, and joined to the Lord, and to each to other, by mutual consent in the practical enjoyment of the ordinances, commanded by Christ their Head and King.

Matt. 11:11; 2 Thess. 1:15; I Cor. 1:12; Eph. 1:1; Rom. 1:7; Acts 19:8, 9, & 26:18; 2 Cor. 6:17; Rev. 18:4; Acts 2:37; with 10:37; Rom. 10:10; Matt. 18:19, 20; Acts 2:42; Acts 9:26; I Pet. 2:5.

.34.

To this Church He hath made His promises, and given 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, 19, 20: I Cor. 11:24, & 3:21; 2 Cor. 6:18; Rom. 9:4, 5; Psa. 133:3; Rom. 3:7, 10; Ezek. 47:2.

.35.

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 property in his own estate, yet they are to supply each others wants, according as their necessity 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; I Cor. 12:6, 7, 12, 18; Ezek. 20:40, 37; Song. 4:12; Eph. 2:19; Rom. 12:4, 5, 6; Col. 1:12; 2:5, 6, 29; Acts 20:32; Acts 5:4; Acts 2: 44, 45; 4:34, 35; Luke 14: 26; I Tim. 6:1; Ephesians 4:16.

.36.

Being thus joined, every Church hath power given them from Christ for their well being, to choose amongst 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; with 15:22, 25; Rom. 12:7, 8; I Tim. 3:2, 6, 7, 8; I Cor. 12:8, 28; Heb. 13:7, 17; I Pet. 5:1, 2, 3; I Pet. 4:15.

.37.

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; I Pet. 5: 1, 2, 3.

.38.

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, desiring of it, ought to be baptized, & after to partake of the Lord's Supper.

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

.39.

That the way and manner of the 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, & 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. 26:16; Mark 15:9, reads [into Jordan] in Greek John 3:23; Acts 8:38; Rev. 1:5; & 7:14; with Hebrews 10:22; Rom. 6:3, 4, 5, 6; I Cor. 15:28, 29; The word Baptism signifies to dip or plunge, yet so as convenient Garments be both upon the Administrator and subject with all modesty, which is also our practice, as many eye witnesses can testify.

.40.

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. 3:7; Matt. 28:19; John 4:2; Acts 20:7; chap. 11:20; I Cor. 11:24; with I Cor. 10:16, 17; Rom. 16:2.

.41.

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

Matt. 18:17; I Cor. 5:4, 13; with 12:6, 2, 3; 2 Cor. 2:6, 7.

.42.

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, by the rule of faith and truth, to proceed against her Members.

Matt. 18:16, 17, 18; Acts 11: 2, 3; I Tim. 5: 19, 20, 21; Col. 4:17; Acts 15:1, 2, 3.

.43.

Christ for the 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 hath given authority, and laid duty upon all to watch over one another.

Acts 20:27, 28; Heb. 13:17, 24; Matt. 24:45; I Thess. 5:2,14; Jude 3, 20; Heb. 10:34, 35, & 12:15; I Cor. 14:3, &c.

.44.

Also such to whom God hath given gifts in the Church, may and ought prophesy, according to the proportion of faith and so to teach publicly the word of God, for the edification, exhortation, and comfort of the Church.

Rom. 12:6; I Pet. 4:10,11; I Cor. 12:7; I Thess. 5:19, 20, 21.

.45.

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; chap.; Acts 15:12; I Cor. 1:10; Jude 19; Rev. 2:20, 21, 22; Acts 15:1, 2; Rom. 14:1, and 15:1, 2, 3.

.46.

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.

I Cor. 4:17; and 14:33, 6, and 16:1; Psalms 122:3; Eph. 2:12, 19, with Rev. 21: I Tim. 3:15; Acts 15:2, 3; Song 8:1; 4:13, 14.

.47.

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 quit and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty.

Rom. 13:1, 2, 3, 4; I Pet. 2:13, 14; I Tim. 2:1, 2, 3.

.48.

That we have great cause to bless God and to be thankful for the peace and liberty we enjoy in the service of our God under the present government, but if the Magistrate should not favor us herein; yet we dare not suspend our practice, because we believe we ought to go on 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 & New Testament 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; yet, 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; and 4:19, and 5:28, 29, 41; and 20:23; I Thess. 3:3; Phil. 1:28, 29; Dan. 3: 16, 17, and 6, 7; 10: 22, 23; I Tim. 6: 13; 14, 15; Rom. 12:1, 8; I Cor. 14:37; Rev. 2:20; 2 Tim. 4:6, 7, 8; Rom. 14:10, 12; 2 Cor. 5:10; Psalms 49:7; Psalms 50:22; Acts 8:38, and 10:1, 2, 35, 44; Rom. 16:23; Deut. 6:13; Rom. 1:9.

.49.

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 rash and vain oaths the Lord is provoked, and this Land mourns.

2 Cor. 10:11; Jer. 4:2; Heb. 6:16; I Thess. 4:6; Rom. 13:5, 6, 7; Matt. 22:21; Titus 3.

.50.

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

I Pet. 2:15, 17 and 5:5; Eph. 5:21, 23; and 6:1, 9; Titus 3:1, 2, 3.

.51.

There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust, and every one 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; 2 Cor. 3:10.

The Conclusion

Thus we desire to give unto Christ, that which is His, and unto all lawful Authority that which is there due, and to owe nothing to any man but love, to live quietly and peaceable, as it becomes Saints, endeavoring an 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 conscienceable, quite, and harmless people (no ways dangerous or troublesome to human society) and to labor and work without own hands, that we may not be chargeable to any, but to give to him that needs both friends and enemies, accounting it more excellent to give then to receive. Also we confess that we know but in part, and 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 we see not, we shall have cause to be thankful to God and them. But if any man shall impose upon is any thing, that we see not commanded by our Lord Jesus Christ, we should in His strength rather embrace all reproaches and tortures of men, to be striped 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 immovable, always abounding in obedience to Christ, as knowing our labor shall not be in vain in the Lord.

Psalms 74:21, 22.

Arise, O God, plead thine own cause; Remember how the foolish man blasphemes thee daily.

O let not the oppressed return ashamed, but let the poor and needy praise they name.

Come Lord Jesus, come quickly.