

Sunday School

Second London Baptist Confession of Faith Of Christian Liberty and Liberty of Conscience (21)

Introduction

“Christians are alive when they believe the gospel and obey the law. They blossom when they understand their liberty.”¹

The chapter was and is necessary. The RCC exerted authority over men’s consciences in doctrine and practice. It demanded total submission.

The Reformation was a clarion call to Christian liberty, indeed, Gospel liberty.

But not only did the RCC demand to be Lord over every man and his conscience, but the State often did as well.

The 2LBCF and the SDF are almost identical. The WCF has a 4th paragraph which is not in either of the other two Confessions.

The notion that the suppression of heresy was the responsibility of the state goes back to Augustine and the City of God.²

However, the Baptists, the Congregationalists, and later, the American Presbyterians, rightly argued for a correct separation of church and state, and a denial of sacralism.

I. The True Bounds of Christian Freedom (1a)

- A. True liberty is Gospel liberty
Christ has purchased it under the Gospel
John 8:32; Rom. 6:7, 18, 22; Gal. 5:1, 13; 1 Pet. 2:16

- B. Gospel liberty consists in Legal Freedom from
 - 1. The guilt of sin
Rom. 6:7; Eph. 1:7

 - 2. The condemning wrath of God
Rom. 8:1; 1 Thess. 1:10

 - 3. The rigor and curse of the Law
Gal. 3:10-13 (Rom. 6:14; 7:6)

¹ Chad Van Dixhoorn, *Confessing the Faith*, 260.

² “Augustine’s legacy is complex, including both limited government and checks and balances on the one hand, and blurring the lines of responsibility between church and state and interfering with religious liberty on the other.” Glenn Sunshine, *Slaying Leviathan*, 31.

