

## CONFESSION OF FAITH.

### CHAPTER 19.-*Of the Law of God.*

VI. Although true Believers be not under the Law, as a Covenant of Works, to be justified, or condemned<sup>1</sup>; yet, is it of great use to them, as well as to others; in that, as a Rule of life informing them of the will of God, and their duty, it directs, and binds them to walk accordingly<sup>2</sup>; discovering also the sinfull pollutions of their nature, hearts, and lives<sup>3</sup>; so as, examining themselves thereby, they may come to further conviction of, humiliation for, and hatred against sin<sup>4</sup>; together with a clearer sight of the need they have of Christ, and the perfection of his obedience<sup>5</sup>. It is likewise of use to the Regenerate, to restrain their corruptions, in that it forbids sin<sup>6</sup>: and, the threatnings of it serve to shew, what, even their sins, deserve; and, what afflictions, in this life, they may expect for them, although freed from the curse thereof threatned in the Law<sup>7</sup>. The Promises of it, in like manner, shew them Gods approbation of obedience, and what blessings they may expect upon the performance thereof<sup>8</sup>; although, not as due to them by the Law, as a Covenant of Works<sup>9</sup>. So as, a mans doing good, and refraining from evil, because the law encourageth to the one, and deterreth from the other, is no evidence of his being under the Law; and, not under grace<sup>10</sup>.

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Question 1.—*Are true believers under the law as a covenant of works, to be thereby justified or condemned?*

*Answer.*—No. Gal. 2:16; 3:13; 4:4, 5; Acts 13:39; Rom. 8:1. Thus do the Papists and Socinians err, maintaining that believers under the gospel, are justified by their obedience to the law of God, (either moral or evangelical) and condemned for the transgression thereof. They are confuted for the following reasons: 1.) By the law is knowledge of sin, Rom. 3:20. 2.) Because as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse, Gal. 3:10. 3.) Because there is not a law given that could have given life to fallen man, Gal. 3:21. 4.) Because Christ is not dead in vain; but if righteousness is by the law, then Christ is dead in vain—without cause, reason, need or fruit, Gal. 2:21; John 15:25. 5.) Because it was promised by God, about four hundred years before the promulgating of the law, that all nations should be blessed in the seed of Abraham, Gen. 22:18; 12:3 *with* Gal. 3:16-18. 6.) Because Christ is become of no effect to them that are justified by the law, Gal. 5:4. 7.) Because believers ought to wait, through the Spirit, for the hope of righteousness by faith, Gal. 5:5. 8.) Because the apostle though a strict follower of the law, counted all his

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<sup>1</sup> Rom. 6:14; Gal. 2:16; 3:13; 4:4, 5; Acts 13:39; Rom. 8:1.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 7:12, 22, 25; Ps. 119:4-6; 1 Cor. 7:19; Gal. 5:14, 16, 18-23.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. 7:7; 3:20.

<sup>4</sup> James 1:23-25; Rom. 7:9, 14, 24.

<sup>5</sup> Gal. 3:24; Rom. 7:24, 25; 8:3, 4.

<sup>6</sup> James 2:11; Ps. 119:101, 104, 128.

<sup>7</sup> Ezra 9:13, 14; Ps. 89:30-34.

<sup>8</sup> Lev. 26:1-14 *with* 2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 6:2, 3; Ps. 37:11 *with* Matt. 5:5; Ps. 19:11.

<sup>9</sup> Gal. 2:16; Luke 17:10.

<sup>10</sup> Rom. 6:12, 14; 1 Pet. 3:8-12 *with* Ps. 34:12-16; Heb. 12:28, 29.

works dung and loss for Christ, Phil. 3:8, 9. 9.) Because Christ is made of God to believers, righteousness, 1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 5:21. 10.) They that seek righteousness not by faith, but by works do not attain to it, Rom. 9:30-32. 11.) Because Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes, Rom. 10:4. 12.) Because justification of men under the law or covenant of works, is by the law, and by the works of the law; but justification of men under grace, or the covenant of grace, is by faith, Rom. 10:5, 6, 8-10; Gal. 3:11, 12; Lev. 18:5. But believers now are not under the law, but under grace, Rom. 6:14, 15; Gal. 5:18. 13.) Because believers under the New and Old Testament, are saved by the grace of Jesus Christ, and not by the law, whose yoke none could bear, Acts 15:10, 11. 14.) Because whosoever transgresses the law in the least, is under the curse of it, Gal. 3:10; Deut. 27:26. And deserved death, and a curse, Rom. 6:23; Ezek. 3:20. But all men, even the regenerate, sin daily, and transgress the law of God, James 1:13 *compared with* James 2:10 *and* 1 John 1:8. 15.) Because good works do not go before, but follow after, justification, Tit. 1:15; Heb. 11:6; Rom. 14:23; 3:9, 10, 23. 16.) Because the righteousness of God, which is by faith in Jesus Christ, is manifested to all—whosoever believes shall have remission of sins, Rom. 3:21, 24, 25; Acts 10:43. 17.) Because justification is from the free grace of God, Rom. 3:24; not by works, otherwise grace would no more be grace, Rom. 11:6. 18.) Because the good works of believers are unclean, and defiled, Isa. 64:6; Gal. 5:17. 19.) Because the Scripture teaches the just shall live by faith, Hab. 2:4; Gal. 3:11. 20.) Because Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness, Gen. 15:5; Rom. 4:3. But justification is not by works, but by believing on him that justifies the ungodly, Rom. 4:5. 21.) Because believers must glory in God alone, Rom. 4:2; 3:27. 22.) Because by the obedience of one, it was foretold, that many should become righteous, Isa. 53:11; which is asserted by Paul, Rom. 5:17. 23.) Because the apostle teaches justification by faith and not by works in both the third of Romans and Galatians.

Question 2.—*What use then is the law of God to those who are true believers?*

*Answer.*—Much in every way. 1.) God's law is a rule of life informing them of the will of God, their duties and straitly binding them to walk accordingly, Rom. 7:12, 22, 25; Ps. 119:4-6; 1 Cor. 7:19. 2.) It is a great means of discovering the sinfulness of their nature, hearts and lives, Rom. 7:7; 3:20. 3.) Believers by meditating upon this most righteous law may bring themselves to greater conviction of, humiliation for, and hatred against sin, James 1:23-25; Rom. 7:9, 14, 24. 4.) Meditation upon this law also helps the believer gain clearer sight of the need they have of Christ and the perfection of his obedience, Gal. 3:24; Rom. 7:24, 25; 8:3, 4. 5.) Additionally, it is of use to restrain their indwelling corruptions, because it forbids all sin, James 2:11; Ps. 119:101, 104, 128. 6.) Though believers are freed from the curse of the law, yet, it holds forth the prospect of the afflictions to be had in this life for sin, Ezra 9:13, 14; Ps. 89:30-34. 7.) Lastly, it displays the approbation of God upon the obedience of men and what blessings might be expected therefrom, Eph. 6:2, 3; Ps. 37:11 *with* Matt. 5:5; Ps. 19:11.

Question 3.—*Is the keeping of the law a sign that a man is still under the law and not under grace?*

*Answer.*—No. 1 Pet. 3:8-12 *with* Ps. 34:12-16. 1.) Paul expressly asserts the contrary saying that a man under grace ought not be deterred from keeping the law, Rom. 6:12, 14. 2.) The warnings to believers commends a godly fear and recognition of God's displeasure with disobedience, Heb. 12:28, 29.