

CONFESSION OF FAITH.

CHAPTER 25.-Of the Church.

VI. There is no other Head of the Church, but the Lord Jesus Christ¹; Nor can the Pope of Rome, in any sence, be head thereof: but is, that Antichrist, that Man of sin, and Son of Perdition, that exalteth himself, in the Church, against Christ, and all that is called God².

Question 1.—*Is there no other head of the visible church, but the Lord Jesus Christ; and can the pope of Rome, in any sense, be the head thereof?*

Answer.—No.Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22. Therefore the Popish church does err, maintaining, that not only Christ is the universal head of the church, but that there is another visible head under him, who, say they, is the Pope of Rome, Christ's vicar, or deputy under him. They are confuted for the following reasons: 1.) Because as not many husbands, but one only, is the head of the wife, so Christ only is the head of the church, Eph. 5:23. 2.) Because the church is espoused to one only, namely, to Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. 11:3. 3.) Because the church is the body of Christ only, Eph. 1:22,23. 4.) Because among all the ecclesiastic orders instituted, and appointed by Christ, we do not read of such a creature, as a universal Vicar of Christ, Eph. 4:11. 5.) Because the church is one body only; (unless it be a monster) but one body cannot have two heads, Rom. 12:4,5. 6.) Because Christ only can inspire, or breathe in vigor, sense, motion, or spiritual life into his members, Eph. 5:29,30; John 6:48,50,51; 15:1,2. 7.) Because there must not be lordship and sovereignty among them, under Christ their head and Lord, Luke 22:25; 1 Pet. 5:2,3. 8.) If the pope is not so much as a bishop of a particular church, he cannot be universal bishop. The first is true, because he does not perform the office of a bishop, which is set down, 1 Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:7-9.

Likewise the Erastians and others, as Arminians err, who make the supreme magistrate the head of the church. They are confuted for the following reasons: 1.) Because the Protestant religion, as it is contained in the Harmony of Confessions, especially in the Confession of Faith, recorded in the first Parliament of king James the sixth, known as the National Covenant, does not acknowledge any supreme head or governor of the church, neither angel, man, pope, prince, nor potentate, save the Lord Christ, from whom alone all subordinate power and authority is derived to the officers of his own church. 2.) Because if the supreme magistrate is a church officer, he must derive his power from Christ, and must be a spiritual and ecclesiastical head and governor, and not a civil only. And if such, then Christ has devolved his own place and office upon him, which is without Scripture proof. 3.) Because if the supreme magistrate is the head of the church, he must have a right to this title, either by human law, or by a divine warrant. Laws of a nation cannot make him head of a church, because such laws cannot make him an ecclesiastical and spiritual officer. There is no divine warrant or commission from Christ, as is clear from Matt. 18:17. From the epistle to Timothy and Titus. From Eph. 4:11; Rom. 12: 7,8; and 1 Cor. 12:28.

¹Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22.

²Matt. 23:8-10; 2 Thess. 2:3,4,8,9; Rev. 13:6.

Question 2.—*Is the pope that antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalts himself in the church of God against Christ, and all that is called God?*

Answer.—Yes. Matt. 23:8-10; 2 Thess. 2:3,4,8,9; Rev. 13:6. Though this is denied by the church of Rome, yet the true description of Antichrist agrees with him.

1.) Because he is not one single man, but an order and race of men, succeeding to one another, in that same state and office; which you will see, by comparing 1 John 4:3 and 2 Thess. 2:7,8 together. 2.) His coming is after the manner of Satan, 2 Thess. 2:9. 3.) As to his name, he calls himself a Christian, but in very truth, he is an adversary to Christ; and by consequence, one that denies Jesus to be the Christ, Rev. 17:14; 19:19; 2 Thess. 2:8; 1 John 2:23. 4.) He sitteth in the temple of God as God, 2 Thess. 2:4. 5.) He rules in the great city, and exercises dominion over the kings of the earth, Rev. 17:18. 6.) He deceives them that dwell on the earth, with lying wonders and miracles, 2 Thess. 2:9; Rev. 13:14,15. He causes all sorts of persons to receive his mark on their right hand, or on their forehead, Rev. 13:16,17. 8.) To him agrees what Paul says, And now ye know what withholdeth (namely the Roman emperor) that he might be revealed in his time, 2 Thess. 2:6,7.