
CHAPTER XVI. (of "A Treatise of Miscellany Questions," pp. 85-88 from *The Works of George Gillespie* volume 2, Still Waters Revival Books reprint)

Summary of this section from the table of contents:

Whether it be lawful, just, and expedient, that the taking of the Solemn League and Covenant be enjoined by the Parliament upon all persons in the kingdom under a considerable penalty,

Nine particulars to be remembered for the right deducing and stating the matter of fact. - The grounds and reasons of such an ordinance and appointment may be eleven. - Four objections answered. - How this ordinance would not be tyranny over men's consciences. - The covenant is no temporary obligation. - If such an ordinance to the army be *scandalum acceptum*, then the not making of it is *scandalum datum*.

CHAPTER XVI.

WHETHER IT BE LAWFUL, JUST AND EXPEDIENT, THAT THERE BE AN ORDINANCE OF PARLIAMENT FOR THE TAKING OF THE SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT, BY ALL PERSONS IN THE KINGDOM, UNDER A CONSIDERABLE PENALTY; OR, AN ANSWER

RETURNED TO A GENTLEMAN WHO HAD CONSULTED A FRIEND CONCERNING THIS QUESTION.

by George Gillespie

First of all, that I may rightly deduce and state the matter of fact, it is to be remembered:-

That the solemn league and covenant hath been the strongest band of union in this common cause of religion and liberty, and that which the common enemies have mainly endeavoured with all their might to overthrow:

That the chief motive to engage Scotland was professed to be the reformation of religion, and uniformity according to the covenant:

That the league and treaty between the two kingdoms is in pursuance of the ends of the covenants, and that we should never lay down arms till these were obtained:

That, by order of parliament, the covenant was turned in Latin, and sent abroad to the reformed churches, with letters from the Assembly of Divines:

That, upon the former assurances, the church and kingdom of Scotland, the parliaments of both kingdoms, the Assembly of Divines, the city of London, and many thousands in England, have taken the covenant, and have sworn most solemnly that they shall constantly, really and sincerely, during all the days of their lifetime, with their lives and fortunes, stand to the performance of it. And both kingdoms have suffered the loss of their goods, cheerfully laid out their means, and laid down their lives resolutely in pursuance thereof.

At the treaty of Uxbridge, the propositions for religion (of which the confirming of the covenant is the first and chiefest) were acknowledged to be of such excellency and absolute necessity, as they were appointed to be treated of in the first place, and that no peace nor agreement should be till they were first agreed unto. The same propositions for religion are yet set down in the first place among the propositions sent last to the king, as being agreed unto by the parliaments of both kingdoms. And now that the king's answer to the propositions is delayed, the House of Commons have thought fit to turn the propositions into ordinances, to show their constant resolution of adhering thereto; and that they may be of greater force, and receive the better obedience from the subjects, have converted the propositions for civil matters into ordinances; and (that their zeal and constancy may appear for religion, which is of greatest moment, and wherein the glory of God and the good of his church is

most concerned) it is desired that the propositions concerning the covenant be likewise turned into an ordinance, with a considerable penalty: that so we may give some real evidence that we do not seek the things of this world in the first place, and the kingdom of heaven, and the righteousness of it, in the last; much less that, Demas-like, we forsake it as lovers of this present world.

Now the grounds and reasons for such an ordinance may be these:-

1. It were a great unthankfulness to God, if, after sacred and solemn vows made in time of our greatest dangers, and when, after our vows, God hath begun to deliver us, and hath dissipated our enemies, we should now grow weary of paying and performing those vows. We may say of the covenant as the prophet said of the laying of the foundation of the second temple, Consider whether from that very day God did not sensibly bless us, and give a testimony from heaven to his own cause and covenant. And now shall the covenant, which was our glory and ornament before God and men, be laid aside as a worn or moth-eaten garment? God forbid.

2. If the taking of the solemn league and covenant be not enjoined by authority of parliaments, under a penalty, but left arbitrary, this were an opening instead of shutting of the door unto as many as are apt and inclinable to refuse and oppose the covenant, yea, to as many as write or speak against it, and maintain opinions or practices contrary to it. The impiety and obstinacy of such persons, if not punished, but connived at, or tacitly permitted by the parliaments, involveth them and the nation as partakers of the sin, and so consequently of the judgment.

Although the oath which Joshua and the princes of Israel made to the Gibeonites was made unadvisedly, and without asking counsel from the mouth of the Lord, yet, some hundred years after, being broken, that breach brought a national judgment, till justice was done upon the offenders. How much more may a national judgment be feared, if even in our days the contempt and violation of a most lawful and sacred oath be winked at? Surely God will not wink at their sin who wink at his dishonour. Better not to have vowed than not to pay and perform.

3. When king Josiah made a solemn covenant (the effect whereof was a thorough reformation, the taking away of the ancient and long-continued high places, the destroying of Baal's vessels, altars, priests, &c. 2 Kings xxiii., throughout), he did not leave his covenant arbitrary; but "he caused all that were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand to it," 2 Chron. xxxiv. 32. In all which he is set forth as a precedent to Christian reformers, that they may know their duty in like cases.

4. All who did take the solemn league and covenant are thereby obliged in their several places and callings (and so the houses of parliament in their place and calling) to endeavour the extirpation of Popery, prelacy, heresy, schism, superstition and profaneness. How is this part of the oath of God fulfilled, if the covenant itself, made for the extirpation of all these, be left arbitrary?

5. The vow and protestation was not left arbitrary; for by the vote, July 30, 1641, it was resolved upon the question, that whosoever would not take that protestation are declared to be unfit to bear any

office in the church or state, which was accordingly published. But the solemn league and covenant must be at least more effectual than the protestation, for the narrative, or preface of the covenant, holdeth forth the necessity of the same as a more effectual means to be used after other means of supplication, remonstrance, and protestation.

6. This same solemn league and covenant was not in the beginning left arbitrary, for some members were suspended from the house for not taking it. And in the ordinance, Feb. 2, 1643, it is ordained and enjoined, that it be solemnly taken in all places throughout the kingdom of England, and dominion of Wales. And withal, in the instructions and orders of parliament then sent into the committees, it was appointed that the names of such as refuse it should be returned to the parliament, that they may take such further course with them as they might think fit. In the ordinance of parliament for ordination of ministers (both the first and last ordinance), the person to be ordained is appointed and obliged to address himself to the presbytery, "and bring with him a testimony of his taking the covenant of the three kingdoms." Again, by the ordinance for election of elders, dated the 19th of August 1645, no member of any congregation may concur or have voice in the choosing of elders but such as have taken the national covenant.

7. In the first article of the treaty between the kingdoms, signed Nov. 29, 1643, it is agreed and concluded, that the covenant be sworn and subscribed by both kingdoms, not that it shall be taken by as many as will in both kingdoms, but that it shall be taken by both kingdoms. How shall this be performed if it be still left arbitrary?

8. In the propositions of peace it is plainly supposed and intimated, that the taking of the covenant shall be enjoined under some penalty, otherwise we have not dealt faithfully, neither with God nor man, in tendering that second proposition to the king concerning his consent to an act of parliament in both kingdoms respectively for the enjoining the taking of the covenant by all the subjects of the three kingdoms, with such penalties as, by mutual advice of both kingdoms, shall be agreed upon.

9. If other propositions of peace be turned into ordinances, and this of the covenant not so, it will strengthen the calumnies cast upon the parliament by the malignant party, that they have had no intention to settle religion according to the covenant, but that they entered into the covenant for bringing in the Scots to their assistance, and for gaining the good opinion of the reformed churches.

10. It will also be a dangerous precedent to separate between the legislative power and the corrective or punitive power. For if after the ordinance of parliament enjoining and ordaining that the covenant be taken universally throughout the whole kingdom there be no sanction nor penalty upon those who shall refuse it, let wise men judge whether this may not expose the authority of parliament to contempt.

11. I shall conclude with this syllogism, That which is not only sinful in itself, but a great dishonour to God, a great scandal to the church, and withal a disobedience to the lawful ordinance of authority, may and ought to be punished by this Christian and reforming parliament. But their offence which

still refuse to take the covenant is not only sinful in itself, but a great dishonour to God, and great scandal to the church, and withal a disobedience to the lawful ordinance of authority.

Therefore the offence of those who still refuse to take the covenant, may and ought to be punished by this Christian and reforming parliament.

Obj. 1. The covenant ought not to be compulsory but free. Good things grow evil when men's consciences are thereunto forced. Ans. 1. An ordinance enjoining the taking of it under a certain penalty were not other compulsion than was used by king Josiah and others, yea by this present parliament upon their own members, and upon ministers to be ordained, as is evident by the passages above expressed. The parliament hath also, by their ordinance dated the 23d of August 1645, imposed the Directory of Worship under certain mulets and penalties to be inflicted upon such as do not observe it, or preach or write against it. 2. It is no tyranny over men's consciences to punish a great and scandalous sin (such as the refusing and opposing of the covenant, or a dividing from it), although the offender in his conscience believe it to be no sin, yea, peradventure, believe it to be a duty, otherwise it had been tyranny over the conscience to punish those who killed the apostles, because they thought they were doing God good service, John xvi. 2. 3. If they who make this objection be so tender of men's consciences why would they keep up an army when there is no enemy, and continue taxes and burdens upon the exhausted counties which are altogether against the consciences of the generality of people in the kingdom. If in these things they will have the conscience of any to be forced, and in the covenant the consciences of some left at liberty, this is not fair and equal, and it will be generally apprehended that such men study their own interest more than that of the public.

Obj. 2. The covenant was occasional and temporary, being made upon the occasion of the prevalency and growing power of the enemy (as is mentioned in the narrative), which foundation being taken away the superstructure cannot stand. Ans. 1. *Ex malis moribus bonae nascuntur leges*. Shall we therefore be no longer bound to obey and maintain good laws, because the evils which gave occasion to their making have ceased? 2. The covenant doth, in express words, oblige us constantly, and all the days of our lives, to pursue the ends therein expressed; so that to hold it but a temporary obligation is a breach of covenant. 3. There is not any one of the ends of the covenant which is yet fully attained. The very Directory of Worship is not observed in most places of the kingdom; neither is the abolition of prelacy, and of the book of Common Prayer, yet established by act of parliament. 4. If we had attained the ends of the covenant (which we have not), yet *non minor est virtus quam quarere parta tueri*, and the recidivation may prove worse than the first disease.

Obj. 3. Some things in the covenant are disputable, for instance, good and learned men differ in their opinions about prelacy. Ans. 1. The oath of supremacy was much more disputable, and great disputes there were among good and learned men about it, yet it hath been imposed upon all members of parliament. 2. If the very materials of the covenant be stuck at, whether they be good in themselves, there is the greater danger to leave all men to abound in their own sense, concerning things of the highest consequence.

Obj. 4. The army which hath served us so faithfully, and regained our liberties, shall by this ordinance lose their own greatest liberty, which is the liberty of their consciences. Ans. 1. In the ordinance and instructions of parliament, dated the 2d Feb. 1643, it was ordained that the covenant should be speedily sent to my Lord General, and the Lord Admiral, and all other commanders-in-chief, governors of towns, &c., to the end it may be taken by all officers and soldiers under their command. I hope the parliament did not here take from their army the liberty of their consciences. 2. The army must either take laws from the parliament, or give laws to the parliament. If they will, as the parliament's servants, submit themselves to its ordinances (which hath ever been professed they would do), then the objection is taken away; but if they will be the parliament's masters or fellows, and independent of the parliament itself, and at liberty to reject as they list so good or wholesome an ordinance as the taking of the covenant, then God have mercy upon us, if the parliament do not preserve their own rights and privileges, with which the kingdom hath intrusted them. 3. If an ordinance, imposing the taking of the covenant under a considerable penalty, be to the army *scandalum acceptum*, the not passing of such an ordinance will be *scandalum datum* to the city of London, and to many thousands of the godly and well-affected of the kingdom, both ministers and people, who have faithfully adhered to and served the parliament, and will still hazard their lives and fortunes in pursuance of the ends of the covenant; yea, a horrible scandal to the reformed churches abroad, whose hearts were once comforted and raised up to expect better things. 4. God forbid there be any such in the houses of parliament as would admit of deformation instead of reformation, and all manner of confusion in place of government. Would not this be the ready way to banish all religion, and open a door for all sorts of schism and heresy? And shall this be the fruits of the labours, blood and expenses, of the three kingdoms, in place of reformation and uniformity, to admit of such a liberty and horrible confusion? Let it not be told in Gath, nor published in Askelon, least the Philistines rejoice, least the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph!

Excerpted from the *Works* of George Gillespie.

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[The Covenanted Reformation Defended Against Contemporary Schismatics: A Response and Antidote Primarily to the Neopresbyterian Malignancy and Misrepresentations, and the Manufactured "Steelite" Controversy, Found in Richard Bacon's A Defense Departed; With a Refutation of Bacon's Independency, Popery, Arminianism, Anabaptism and Various Other Heresies \(Including an Exhibition of His Opposition to Scripture and the Covenanted Reformation, in General; and His Opposition to John Calvin, John Knox, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland \[Especially 1638-1649\], Samuel Rutherford, George Gillespie, the Testimony of the Covenanter Martyrs, the Reformed Presbytery, the Puritan Reformed Church of Edmonton and a Host of Other Prominent Reformers from Past Generations, in Particular\) -- With Copious Notes on Mr. Bacon's Backsliding and His Blackening of the Blue Banner; as Well as Various Replies to Other Modern Malignants by Greg Barrow \(Greg Price, Reg Barrow, Larry Birger, et al.\)](#) (Though set in the context of a debate with one individual, this book addresses a number of specific problems which plague the Presbyterian and Reformed churches of our day in general. "It conclusively and irrefutably demonstrates that those churches which today call themselves Presbyterian [and even many which claim a more general Reformed heritage] have grievously departed from the Scriptural standards and principles of the previous Spirit led Reformations [of the 16th and 17th centuries]. This will become progressively [and painfully] clear as the reader witnesses evidence upon evidence of defection from biblically based Reformation attainments (Phil. 3:16) -- and the burying and/or removing of the ancient Reformation landmarks. Ultimately, when the testimony and evidence [presented in this book] is weighed in light of Scriptural verities, it is entirely safe to say that the original Reformers would not only have sought negative ecclesiastical sanctions against our modern pseudo-Reformers, but in many cases negative civil sanctions as well," writes Reg Barrow in the "Publisher's Preface." This book, of over 300 [8.5" X 11"] pages, is also offered as a cerlox bound photocopy [\$14.98 Canadian funds] or a hardcover photocopy [\$25.00 Canadian funds]. It is also **free** on most of the CDs in both the ***REFORMATION BOOKSHELF CD set*** [30 CDs, <http://www.swrb.com/Puritan/reformation-bookshelf-CDs.htm>] and the ***PURITAN BOOKSHELF CD set*** [32 CDs,

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GILLESPIE, GEORGE

The Works of George Gillespie (2 vol.)

Gillespie was one of the Scottish commissioners to the Westminster Assembly. One of the great theologians of all time ó almost singlehandedly steering this august Assembly at certain points. As Hetherington notes, "in all those debates no person took a more active part, or gained more distinction than George Gillespie," though he was the youngest man there. Furthermore, Hetherington calls him a "genius of the highest order," and writes that his work "dazzled and astonished his countrymen." He "held an undisputed position among the foremost of the distinguished men by whose talents and energy the Church of Scotland was delivered from the prelatie despotism" of that day. This rare work contains Gillespie's personal notes during the Westminster Assembly and A Dispute Against English Popish Ceremonies. A Dispute Against English Popish Ceremonies is a rare classic on Reformed worship, taking on all the arguments related to the use of man-made ceremonies in worship. Burned by the Prelates (Episcopalians) just after it first appeared in 1637, this masterful defense of the regulative principle has yet to be answered (by those that oppose God's sovereignty in worship). It ably, and in a detailed manner, refutes the old errors of Prelacy and Romanism ó many of which are being resurrected in our day by writers like James Jordan (and others abandoning historic Presbyterian [i.e. Biblical] worship). Gillespie's practical "Treatise of Miscellany Questions," contains 22 chapters. Topics dealt with range from: whether prophets and prophesying continued beyond the primitive church (answered in the negative); whether a sound heart and an unsound head can consist together; what are heresies and what is their purpose; are infants to be baptized; should the civil government attach a negative sanction to not swearing to the Solemn League and Covenant (against one aspect of Theonomy); etc. These Works also contains a memoir of Gillespie's life and writings, written by Hetherington, Gillespie's sermons before the house of commons, and much more!

GILLESPIE, GEORGE

Wholesome Severity Reconciled With Christian Liberty, or, The True Resolution of a Present

Controversy Concerning Liberty of Conscience (1644)

One of our most rare and valuable resources. A masterpiece! Wholesome Severity was written during the sitting of the Westminster Assembly and demonstrates why Gillespie is considered one of the most influential Divines of the seventeenth century. Here we have the question stated (regarding liberty of conscience), the middle (or biblical) way between Popish tyranny and Schismatizing liberty approved, and also confirmed from Scripture, with the testimonies of Divines, yea of whole churches added to vindicate Christ's kingship (over the idolatry of the rule of an ill-informed, sinful conscience sitting in judgement upon the truth of the Word of God). The chief arguments of exception used in (Roger Williams) *The Bloudy Tenet, The Compassionate Samaritane, M.S. to A.S.* etc. are examined herein and Gillespie also deals with many of the thorny questions related to the abiding validity of the Old Testament judicial laws. Eight distinctions are added for qualifying and clearing the whole matter. In conclusion, a moving brotherly appeal is addressed to the five Apologists (Independents at the Assembly) for choosing accommodation rather than toleration. This is classic Scottish (covenanted) Presbyterianism at its best, a work that can be read over and over with increasing profit! This exceedingly rare essay is not found in Gillespie's Works or *The Presbyterian Armoury*, however it is also available on two cassettes for \$4.77.

GILLESPIE, GEORGE

Aaron's Rod Blossoming; or, the Divine Ordinance of Church Government Vindicated

The remainder of the title reads: "So as the Present Erastian Controversy Concerning the Distinction of Civil and Ecclesiastical Government, Excommunication and Suspension, is Fully Debated and Discussed, from the Holy Scriptures, for the Jewish and Christian Antiquities, from the Consent of Later Writers, from the True Nature and Rights of Magistracy, and from the Groundlessness of the Chief Objections made Against the Presbyterial Government, in Point of a Domineering Arbitrary Unlimited Power." In short, this book deals with the biblical view of the separation of church and state, and is especially pertinent concerning the modern political climate, in which the old Erastian tree of civil ecclesiastical interference is growing strong and spreading much poisonous fruit. As with just about everything else Gillespie wrote, this book has been widely recognized as THE classic in its field. Three major sections cover "Of the Jewish Church Government;" "Of Christian Church Government;" and "Of Excommunication from the Church, and of Suspension from the Lord's Table." Lachman, in his Preface writes, "It presents the classic Reformed point of view, one now little heard and perhaps less understood. Gillespie writes carefully and clearly, in many respects resembling the better known John Owen in the clarity and power of his reasoning." Bannerman states, "This famous treatise is unquestionably the most able, learned, systematic, and complete work on the Erastian controversy in existence. It deserves, and will repay, the most careful study" (*The Church of Christ*, vol. 2., p. 432). Beattie (*Memorial Volume*, p. xxxvi, 1879) called this book, "the ablest plea for Presbytery ever made."

RUTHERFORD, SAMUEL

A Free Disputation Against Pretended Liberty of Conscience (1649 edition.)

Rutherford's *Free Disputation*, though scarce, is still one of his most important works – with maybe only a few copies of the actual book left in existence. Though Rutherford is affectionately remembered in our day for his *Letters*, or for laying the foundations of constitutional government (against the divine right of kings) in his unsurpassed *Lex Rex*, his *Free Disputation* should not be overlooked – for it contains the same searing insights as *Lex Rex*. In fact, this book should probably be known as Rutherford's "politically incorrect" companion volume to *Lex Rex*. A sort of sequel aimed at driving pluralists and antinomians insane. Written against "the Belgick Arminians, Socinians, and other Authors contending for lawlesse liberty, or licentious Toleration of Sects and Heresies," Rutherford explains the undiluted Biblical solution to moral relativism, especially as it is expressed in ecclesiastical and civil pluralism! (Corporate pluralism being a violation of the first commandment and an affront to the holy God of Scripture). He also deals with conscience, toleration, penology (punishment), and the judicial laws, as related to both the civil and ecclesiastical realms. Excellent sections are also included which address questions related to determining the fundamentals of religion, how covenants bind us, the perpetual obligation of social covenants (with direct application to the Solemn League and Covenant and the covenant-breaking of Cromwell and his sectarian supporters), whether the punishing of seducing teachers be persecution of conscience, and much more. Walker adds these comments and context regarding Rutherford's *Free Disputation*, "The principle of toleration was beginning to be broached in England, and in a modified shape to find acceptance there. Samuel Rutherford was alarmed, or rather, I should say, he was horrified, for he neither feared the face of man or argument. He rushed to the rescue of the good old view... It is not so easy to find a theoretical ground for toleration; and Rutherford has many plausible things to say against it. With the most perfect confidence, he argues that it is alike against Scripture and common sense that you should have two religions side by side. It is outrageous ecclesiastically, it is sinful civilly. He does not, however, take what I call the essentially persecuting ground. He does not hold that the magistrate is to punish religion as religion. Nay, he strongly maintains that the civil magistrate never aims at the conscience. The magistrate, he urges, does not send anyone, whether a heretic (who is a soul murderer--RB) or a murderer, to the scaffold with the idea of producing conversion or other spiritual result, but to strengthen the foundations of civil order. But if he gives so much power to the king, he is no lover of despotism withal: the king himself must be under law. To vindicate this great doctrine is the object of another book, the celebrated *Lex Rex*; of which it has been said by one competent to judge, that it first clearly developed the constitutionalism which all men now accept" (*Theology and Theologians...*, pp. 11-12). In our day Francis Schaeffer, and numerous others, have critiqued many of the problems found in modern society, but most have spent little time developing explicitly Biblical solutions – especially regarding the theoretical foundations that Rutherford addresses here. Rutherford's *Free Disputation* provides a detailed blueprint for laying the foundations that must be laid before any lasting, God-honoring solutions will be found.

Furthermore, Rutherford and his writings were the enemies of all governments not covenanted with Christ. This book will give you a very clear picture as to why "the beast" (civil and ecclesiastical) has reserved his special hatred for such teaching. As Samuel Wylie noted "[t]he dispute, then, will not

turn upon the point whether religion should be civilly established... but it is concerning what religion ought to be civilly established and protected, -- whether the religion of Jesus alone should be countenanced by civil authority, or every blasphemous, heretical, and idolatrous abomination which the subtle malignity of the old serpent and a heart deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, can frame and devise, should be put on an equal footing therewith" (*Two Sons of Oil: or, The Faithful Witness For Magistracy and Ministry Upon a Scriptural Basis*, softcover). Can our generation swallow Rutherford's hard, anti-pluralistic, Covenanter medicine, poured forth from the bottle of the first commandment, without choking on their carnal dreams of a free and righteous society divorced from God (and His absolute claims upon everyone and everything)? Not without the enabling power of the Holy Spirit -- that is for sure! In summary, this book answers all the hardest questions theonomists (and their wisest and best opponents) have been asking for the last 20-30 years (and these answers are much more in depth than any we have seen in the last couple of millennia [less about a century to account for the apostles]). As the reader will discover, Rutherford was a wealthy man when it came to wisdom (and much advanced theologically), and those who take the time to gaze into the King's treasure house, as exhibited in this book, will find that they are greatly rewarded. Furthermore, because of its uncompromising stand upon the Word of God, this book is sure to be unpopular among a wicked and adulterous generation. However, on the other hand, it is sure to be popular among the covenanted servants of King Jesus! This is one of the best books (in the top five anyway) for advanced study of the Christian faith. We have now obtained an easy-to-read, amazingly clear copy of this very rare, old treasure. Great price too, considering that a copy of the 1649 edition, containing this quality of print, would likely cost upwards of \$1000 on the rare book market -- though it is unlikely you would ever see a copy for sale!

RUTHERFURD, SAMUEL

The Covenant of Life Opened: or, A Treatise of the Covenant of Grace (1655 edition.)

A exceedingly rare Covenanter classic! These are deep waters and this title is recommended for those who have already developed some fair strength in swimming the strong theological currents of the second Reformation. Containing some of *Rutherford's most mature thought*, this book was published six years before Rutherford passed on to glory. Over 350 pages.

ROBERTS, WILLIAM L.

The Reformed Presbyterian Catechism (1853)

A manual of instruction, drawing from such notable authors as William Symington and J.R. Willson, presenting "arguments and facts confirming and illustrating the 'Distinctive Principles'" of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. Chapters deal with: "Christ's Mediatorial Dominion in general;" "Christ's exclusive Headship over the Church;" "The Supreme and Ultimate Authority of the Word of

God in the Church;" Civil Government, the Moral Ordinance of God;" Christ's Headship over the Nations;" "The Subjection of the Nations to God and to Christ;" The Word, or Revealed Will of God, the Supreme Law in the State;" "The Duty of Nations, in their National Capacity, to acknowledge and support the True Religion:" "The Spiritual Independence of the Church of Christ:" "The Right and Duty of Dissent from an immoral Constitution of Civil Government;" "The Duty of Covenanting, and the Permanent Obligations of Religious Covenants;" "The Application of these Principles to the Governments, where Reformed Presbyterians reside, in the form of a Practical Testimony;" and finally "Application of the Testimony to the British Empire." A most important book, as we approach (possibly) the end of the great apostasy and will be in need of preparing for the dawning of the glorious millennial blessings to come; the days prophesied in which the church "shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings" (Isa. 60:16).

REFORMED PRESBYTERY

Act, Declaration, And Testimony, For The Whole Of The Covenanted Reformation, As Attained To, And Established In, Britain and Ireland; Particularly Betwixt The Years 1638 and 1649, Inclusive. As, Also, Against All The Steps Of Defection From Said Reformation, Whether In Former Or Later Times, Since The Overthrow Of That Glorious Work, Down To This Present Day (1876)

Upholds the original work of the Westminster Assembly and testifies to the abiding worth and truth formulated in the Westminster family of documents. Upholds and defends the crown rights of King Jesus in church and state, denouncing those who would remove the crown from Christ's head by denying His right to rule (by His law) in both the civil and ecclesiastical spheres. Testifies to the received doctrine, government, worship, and discipline of the Church of Scotland in her purest (reforming) periods. Applies God's Word to the Church's corporate attainments "with a judicial approbation of the earnest contendings and attainments of the faithful, and a strong and pointed judicial condemnation of error and the promoters thereof" (The Original Covenanter and Contending Witness, Dec. 17/93, p. 558.). Shows the church's great historical victories (such as the National and Solemn League and Covenant, leading to the Westminster Assembly) and exposes her enemies actions (e.g. the Prelacy of Laud; the Independency, sectarianism, covenant breaking and ungodly toleration set forth by the likes of Cromwell [and the Independents that conspired with him]; the Erastianism and civil sectarianism of William of Orange, etc.). It is not likely that you will find a more consistent working out of the principles of Calvinism anywhere. Deals with the most important matters relating to the individual, the family, the church and the state. Sets forth a faithful historical testimony of God's dealings with men during some of the most important days of church history. A basic text that should be mastered by all Christians. This book is also free on the web at: <http://www.covenanter.org/RefPres/actdeclarationandtestimony/acttitle.htm>.

HOUSTON, THOMAS

Unity and Uniformity in the Church (1881)

This item lays out the case for unity among churches, proving its assertions from: (1.) throughout Scripture; (2.) from our Lord's declaring His will both in precept and prayer; (3.) from apostolic practise; and (4.) from the covenanted Reformation's "Solemn League and Covenant" which lead to the production of the Westminster standards. Houston notes that in the Apostolic church "the government of the church was one and common wherever churches were planted. It was Presbyterian, and neither Prelatic, a system of monarchical despotism, nor Congregational, a system of popular democracy." This biblical and Presbyterian uniformity was considered the apostolic, visible and doctrinal manifestation of the scriptural injunction to "one Lord, one faith, (and) one baptism." Houston also points out that "the only true and safe way of union is based on the platform of Scriptural uniformity; while that which is framed on allowing diversity in doctrine, and differences in government and worship, is a mere human contrivance, and its effect is to sanction and perpetuate divisions (which is to sanction schism under the false pretence of unity--RB), and to mar the prospect of an ultimate happy union in the church of Christ." Biblical union and uniformity is shown to be based on "agreement in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government." Moreover, the author contends that, "this is to be constantly sought after by men united in mind and heart, pledged to God and to one another; it is to be externally manifested, and to be diligently labored for, that it may be generally and universally prevalent. It is never to be viewed as impracticable. This was the main design of the convocation of the Westminster Assembly." The eschatological aspect of visible unity is also noticed, shedding valuable light on such postmillennial strongholds as, "The watchmen on the walls of Zion shall see eye to eye, they shall lift up the voice together, and together shall they sing" (Isa. 52:8) and "The Lord shall be King over all the earth; in that day there shall be one Lord, and His name one" (Zech. 14:9). This book is full of faithful encouragement and is one of the best introductions to this topic we have seen.

McFEETERS, J.C.

Sketches of the Covenanters

Stirring accounts of sacrifice and martyrdom for the Reformed Faith that will bring tears to eyes of all but the backslidden. Follows the chain of events which gave Scotland two Reformations and a Revolution. Knox, the National Covenant, the Westminster Assembly, the Field Meetings, and much more is covered. The history of great battles for Christ and His royal rights are recounted in this moving history book. Sheds much light upon the warfare with the dragon for true liberty. One of our best history books, highly recommended!

REFORMED PRESBYTERY

An Explanation and Defence of the Terms of Communion, Adopted by the Community of Dissenters, etc.

Defends the inescapable necessity of creeds and confessions, while promoting a fully creedal church membership. Shows how the law of God obliges all Christians "to think the same things, and to speak the same things; holding fast the form of sound words, and keeping the ordinances as they have been delivered to us" (Col. 3:13). After laying some basic groundwork, this book proceeds to defend the six points of the "Terms of Ministerial and Christian Communion Agreed Upon by the Reformed Presbytery." These six points are the most conservative and comprehensive short statements of consistent Presbyterianism you will likely ever see. Besides the obvious acknowledgement of the alone infallible Scriptures, the Westminster Standards, and the divine right of Presbyterianism, these points also maintain the perpetual obligation of our Covenants, National and Solemn League, the Renovation of these covenants at Auchensaugh in 1712, and the Judicial Act, Declaration and Testimony emitted by the Reformed Presbytery. In short, this book sets forth adherence to the whole of the covenanted reformation, in both church and state, as it has been attained by our covenanting forefathers.

[Back to swrb home page](#)