

CONFESSION OF FAITH.

CHAPTER 1.-*Of the Holy Scripture.*

VI. The whole Counsel of God concerning all things necessary for his own Glory, mans salvation, Faith, and Life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or Traditions of men.¹ Neverthelesse we acknowledge the inward illumination of the Spirit of God to be necessary for the saving understanding of such things as are revealed in the Word:² And that there are some circumstances concerning the Worship of God, and Government of the Church, common to human actions and Societies, which are to be ordered by the Light of Nature and Christian Prudence, according to the generall Rules of the Word, which are alwayes to be observed.³

Question 1—*Is the whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence, may be deduced from it?*

Answer—Yes. 2 Tim. 3:15; Gal. 1:8, 9; 2 Thess. 2:2. Thus do the Romanists err teaching that we stand in need of the traditions of men to supplement the Scriptures. We do not stand in need of a supply of unwritten traditions, because: 1.) all Scripture is given, that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished to all good works, 2 Tim. 3:16, 17. 2.) The Psalmist says expressly, the Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul, Ps. 19:7, 8. 3.) Nothing is to be added to the Word of God, Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:6. Therefore the Scriptures must be a complete and perfect rule of Faith, and not an imperfect Rule, or but partly a Rule, as some teach.

Question 2—*Is it warrantable to argue in Articles or Matters of Faith, by consequences natively deduced from Scripture?*

Answer—Yes. Thus do they err who assert those matters to be matters of faith only that can be shown explicitly from the Scriptures. They are confuted: 1.) Because, Christ himself proves that necessary point of Faith, the Resurrection of the dead, from the Scripture by a consequence, Matt. 22:29, 31, 32. To be anyone's God, is to give one eternal life, Ps. 33:12; 144:15. Whence follows, that those Patriarchs lived still with God, in respect of their Souls, (which the Sadducees denied) Acts 23:8, and should also rise in respect of their bodies, and live eternally: seeing he is called a God, not of one part only, but of their whole persons. And in the same chapter, Matt. 22:43, 45, Christ proves his Deity by use of a consequence from Scripture, against the Pharisees. 2.) So does Apollos, Acts 18:28, and Paul, Acts 13:22 prove from the Old Testament, Jesus to be the Christ: but this is not expressly said in the Old Testament, that he is Christ. Is not that which necessarily follows from Scripture, contained in it implicitly, and implicitly revealed by God, and is infallibly true?

¹2 Tim. 3:15-17; Gal. 1:8, 9; 2 Thess. 2:2.

²John 6:45; 1 Cor. 2:9, 10, 12.

³1 Cor. 11:13, 14; 1 Cor. 14:26, 40.

Question 3—*Is the inward Illumination of the Spirit of God, necessary for the saving understanding of such things, as are revealed in the Word?*

Answer—Yes. John 6:45; 1 Cor. 2:9-12. Because 1.) the Disciples of Christ, were not able to understand the Scripture, before he opened their eyes, Luke 24:45. 2.) The Jews to this day, cannot understand the Scriptures of the Old Testament, until the veil by the Spirit of God be taken away, 2 Cor. 3:14-18. 3.) The Psalmist David seeketh from God, the opening of his eyes, that he may behold wondrous things out of his Law, Ps. 119:18.

Question 4—*What are the Circumstances concerning the Worship of God and the Government of the Church, common to human actions and Societies, which are to be ordered by the Light of Nature and Christian Prudence in accordance with the general Rules of the Word which are always to be observed?*

Answer—The Spirit of God and of Christ is pleased often to argue from the Light of Nature in the case of the habits of men and women in their public Church assemblies. 1.) The framers of the Confession commend the example given in 1 Cor. 11:13, 14; that women's heads should be covered and men's uncovered in praying or prophesying. Also, the men have short hair and the women long hair, *cf.* Rev. 9:8. These are cited not as habits peculiar to the Church but common to human actions and Societies; they are matters ordered by Nature and to be continued in the Church assembly *simpliciter*. 2.) In the case of praying or prophesying in an unknown tongue (unless some do interpret), Paul argues from the Light of Nature; 1 Cor. 14:7-11. Outside of the assembly we communicate in an understandable voice so that others might comprehend our speech; likewise, this ought to continue in the Church assembly; 1 Cor. 14:26, 40. 3.) So too, in the matter of women speaking in the public worship of the Church, the apostle enjoins silence as becoming the woman; 1 Cor. 14:34, 35. Elsewhere, he reasons from the nature of the woman and her part in the Fall; 1 Tim. 2:11-14. 4.) Likewise, we might consider the matter and manner of clothing. The apostles commend modest appareling of women; 1 Pet. 3:1-5; 1 Tim. 2:9, 10 without giving specific instructions, yet we are left with general rules which ought always to be observed; Deut. 22:5; Isa. 3:16-24; 47:1-3; Zeph. 1:8; Prov. 7:10; Gen. 38:14, 15; Ezek. 23:40; 2 Kings 9:30; Jer. 4:30. These things concerning both the matter and manner of apparel are to be ordered by the Light of Nature and Christian prudence and ought always to be observed—both in and out of the public Church assembly. In matters of Church government, we observe 1.) As every society in the world has a distinct government within itself, without which it could not subsist, so too the Church—for it is a society of those professing the true religion together with their children. 2.) That in all matters of difference, the lesser number in every society should give way to, and the controverted matters determined and concluded by the major part; else there would be no end to controversy; Acts 16:4; Matt. 18:17; *cf.* 1 Cor. 11:16; 2 Cor. 2:6. 3.) That in case of ill administration in inferior societies the parties grieved should have liberty to appeal to superior societies that equity may have its place; Acts 15:1, 2; *cf.* Acts 25:11. From this principle, we derive the ascending courts of presbytery. 4.) Every society formed to meet for a purpose must have a settled place and time to gather; *cf.* Acts 16:13.