

ORDINANCE OF COVENANTING.

The Solemn League and Covenant.

The First Article.

“That public, social covenanting, is an ordinance of God, obligatory on churches and nations under the New Testament; that the National Covenant and the Solemn League are an exemplification of this divine institution; and that these Deeds are of continued obligation upon the moral person.”—Fourth Term of Communion.

Question 1.—*Is it a chief article of our faith that we seek to preserve the reformed religion of the Kirk of Scotland?*

Answer.—Yes. 3 John 11. This we should endeavor because: 1.) In doctrine, it is all orthodox. Scripture commands us to study to maintain sound doctrine, Tit. 1:9. 2.) In worship, it is pure and unmixed. Scripture commands us to worship God in the way He has appointed and none else, Deut. 12:32; Matt. 15:9; Col. 2:23. 3.) In discipline and government, against our common enemies; for it is warrantable, and no way tyrannical. The government is upon Christ’s shoulders and ought to be fixed by Him alone, Isa. 9:6, 7; Eph. 4:11.

Question 2.—*Ought we to endeavor the reformation of religion in those nations, which are not reformed, in doctrine, worship, discipline and government, according to the word of God and the example of the best reformed churches?*

Answer.—Yes. Matt. 28:19, 20. The Great Commission lays a burden upon the Church to seek to disciple the nations. This ought to be effected according to the word of God, Ps. 119:9; which alone can cleanse men from iniquity. It may also be carried out with a reference to the godly examples of those who have already reformed, 1 Cor. 11:1; Song 1:8.

Question 3.—*Ought we to endeavor to bring the churches of God in diverse kingdoms into nearest conjunction and uniformity?*

Answer.—Yes. Zech. 14:9. We ought to seek this uniformity in: 1.) Religion, for in the New Testament church, it was prophesied that the Lord would give not only one heart, but one way, Jer. 32:39. 2.) Profession of faith, for we are exhorted to walk by the same rule, so far as we have attained, to study uniformity, not diversity in things that are agreed upon to be good and right, Phil. 3:16. 3.) Form of church government, for the apostle enjoins such in various matters of church policy, 1 Tim. 4:14; 5:17, 19. 4.) Directory for worship, for the apostle clearly intimates and commends such an uniformity, 1 Cor. 14:27, 33, 40. 5.) Catechising, for we are exhorted all to speak the same thing, 1 Cor. 1:10; and that ought to be sound doctrinally, Tit. 2:1.

Question 4.—*What is the end of seeking the aforesaid conjunction and uniformity?*

Answer.—The end of seeking after such a conjunction and uniformity is twofold: 1.) That we and our posterity may live in faith and love as brethren. The apostles enjoin holding fast the form of sound words in faith and love, 2 Tim. 1:13; and all that we might live together in love as brethren, 1 Pet. 3:8. 2.) That the Lord may delight to dwell in the midst of us, Zech. 2:10, 11.

Question 5.—*Is it proper to undertake covenanting, not only for ourselves, but for our children?*

Answer.—Yes. Deut. 5:2, 3. Scripture affords many examples of this principle being taken for granted. The relations of the domestic circle are of Divine appointment, Ps. 68:6; 107:41. The Lord is not only the God of each individual, but of families, Jer. 31:1. In fact, the wrath of God is threatened against all families that do not call upon His Name, which do not vow to Him, Jer. 10:25. It was by families that Israel, in the land of Moab, did take hold of the covenant and present themselves before Him, Deut. 29:18. This entails a careful instruction in these covenants, and to cause the children to make conscience thereof, Deut. 6:6, 7. For without such diligent instruction of our children, and good examples given by us to them, God may justly plague us, and let them forget and fall from this covenant, and the judgments of God will fall on the posterity, as on Israel, for King Saul's breaking of the oath to the Gibeonites, 2 Sam. 21:1.