

## ORDINANCE OF COVENANTING.

(The Solemn League and Covenant, Pt. 3.)

“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.

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### The Second Article.

“II. That we shall, in like manner, without respect of persons, endeavour the extirpation of Popery, Prelacy (that is, Church government by archbishops, bishops, their chancellors and commissioners, deans and chapters, archdeacons, and all other ecclesiastical officers depending on that hierarchy), superstition, heresy, schism, profaneness, and whatsoever shall be found contrary to sound doctrine and the power of Godliness; lest we partake in other men’s sins, and thereby be in danger to receive of their plagues; and that the Lord may be one, and his name one, in the three kingdoms.

Question 1.—*Ought we to declare ourselves against those courses opposite to reformation?*

*Answer.*—Yes. Rom. 16:17. The church has no power or authority to deformation but only to reformation, 2 Cor. 10:8. Indeed, the apostle confirms that the power to command reformation may even be conducted with severity, 2 Cor. 13:10. So, this power is designed to press the erring into soundness of faith, Tit. 1:13.

Question 2.—*To that end, is it proper, relying upon God’s grace, according to our places and callings, without respect of persons, to endeavor the extirpation of Popery and Prelacy?*

*Answer.*—Yes. 3 John 9, 10. Popery, being that hierarchical system of that Man of Sin and the body of Antichrist, 2 Thess. 2:3, 4; Rev. 17:3, 4, we ought to seek to extirpate it, Rev. 17:16, 17. Romanism is a quasi-religious political usurpation of that kingdom which belongs to Christ alone, in church and state, Rev. 13:1-8. Prelacy, being an hierarchical system that is a lesser branch of that papistical dominion ought to be overturned together with its pagan philosophy of governing, Matt. 20:25-27.

Question 3.—*Ought we to endeavor the extirpation of superstition?*

*Answer.*—Yes. Acts 17:22. All superstitious observances, whether of rites and ceremonies or keeping of days, ought to be extirpated from the church as remnants of past heathenism, Jer. 10:2, 3. These things being so many snares to lead people into gross idolatry, they must be extirpated, Deut. 12:30, 31. While the keeping of Jewish ceremonies was tolerated for a time, during a period of accommodation, *cf.* Acts 16:1-3; Gal. 2:3-5; it was viewed as a matter of subverting the faith when men were persuaded to return to them in light of the coming of Christ, Gal. 4:8-10. Thus, the apostle warns Christians not to allow themselves to be brought under these types and shadows again, Col. 2:16-23. Though, perhaps, these things were commanded by God Himself, yet, once perverted, not being a matter of natural morality, it becomes an intolerable monument of idolatry, 2 Kings 18:4.

Question 4.—*Ought we to endeavor the extirpation of heresy?*

*Answer.*—Yes. Gal. 5:20. Heretics are those who offend against truth, *cf.* Acts 24:14; 1 Cor. 11:19. Heresy signifies going astray from sound and wholesome doctrine, and

continuing stubbornly in the false opinion, Tit. 3:10, 11. It is a work of the flesh which has no regard for condemning the approved truth, and peace of the Church, *cf.* Gal. 5:19. Heresy, when embraced, is a damning disease, 2 Pet. 2:1. It must be extirpated because, as Paul says, it is like a spreading canker, or gangrene, if left in the body, 2 Tim. 2:17.

Question 5.—*Ought we to endeavor the extirpation of schism?*

*Answer.*—Yes. 1 Cor. 12:25. Schismatics are those who offend against charity. Schism is a carnal walking, usually accompanied with envying and strife, 1 Cor. 3:3. This they do first by bringing divisions in the body, 1 Cor. 11:18, which leads to sectarianism and separatism from lawful and well constituted churches, Jude 19. Paul commands us to extirpate such schisms, 1 Cor. 1:10.

Question 6.—*Ought we to endeavor the extirpation of profanity?*

*Answer.*—Yes. Ezek. 22:26. It is noted as a great fault, that the ministers of God do not distinguish between the holy and the profane, Lev. 10:1-3. The Lord promises a time coming when His ministers would teach the people the difference, Ezek. 44:23.

Question 7.—*Ought we to endeavor the extirpation of whatsoever is contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godliness?*

*Answer.*—Yes. 1 Tim. 1:9-11; 2 Tim. 3:5. It is the duty of the church to extirpate anything contrary to sound doctrine—for this all teachers of the church should be trained, Tit. 1:9. Additionally, ministers ought to endeavor to inculcate the life and power of godliness and refuse that which is contrary, 1 Tim. 4:6-8.

Question 8.—*Ought we to beware that we partake not in other men's sins and plagues?*

*Answer.*—Yes. 2 John 10, 11. There are many ways of sharing the guilt of other people's transgressions; it may be done by culpable silence, indolence, unconcernedness, private contribution, public countenance and assistance, inward approbation, open apology and defence, Ps. 50:18; 1 Tim. 5:22. The Divine call is for those who would be accounted the seed of the woman to come out of any participation, or partaking, of all things that incur moral guilt lest we share in their plagues, Rev. 18:4.

Question 9.—*Ought we to endeavor that the Lord may be one, and His name one, in our national capacity?*

*Answer.*—Yes. Zech. 14:9. The kingdom of God among men shall be a universal and united kingdom of Messiah the Prince, Dan. 7:13, 14. 1.) It shall be a universal kingdom: *The Lord shall be King over all the earth*, Ps. 47:2. He is, and ever was, so of right, and in the sovereign disposals of his providence his kingdom does *rule over all* and none are exempt from his jurisdiction, Dan. 4:35; but it is here promised that He shall be so by actual possession of the hearts of His subjects, Ps. 110:3; He shall be acknowledged King by all in all places, Ps. 72:8, 11; His authority shall be owned and submitted to, and allegiance sworn to Him, Ps. 102:22. This will have its accomplishment when that seventh prophetic trumpet sounds, Rev. 11:15. 2.) It shall be a united kingdom: *There shall be one Lord, and his name one*, Eph. 4:5. All shall worship one God only, and not idols, and shall be unanimous in the worship of Him, Ps. 22:27, 28. All false gods shall be abandoned, and all false ways of worship abolished; and as God shall be the center of their unity, in whom they shall all meet, so the scripture shall be the rule of their unity, by which they shall all walk, Isa. 2:17-22.