Confession of Faith Ratification Act 1690

1690 CHAPTER 7

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Act Ratifying the Confession of Faith and settleing Presbyterian Church Government. **X1**

X2

Editorial Information

X1 Short title given by Statute Law Revision Scotland Act 1964 (c. 80), **Sch. 2**

X2 This Act is listed in 12mo edition as 1690 c. 5

Our Soveraigne Lord and Lady The King and Queens Majesties and three estates of Parliament Conceiveing it to be their bound duty after the great deliverance that God hath lately wrought for this Church and Kingdom In the first place to settle and secure therein the true protestant Religion according to the truth of Gods word as it hath of a long tyme been professed within this Land, as also the Government of Christs Church within this Nation agreeable to the word of God and most conducive to the advancement of true piety and Godliness and the establishing of peace and tranquillity within this Realme And that by ane Article of the Claime of Right It is declared that prelacie and the superiority of any office in the Church above presbyters Is and hath been a great and insupportable greivance and trouble to this Nation and contrary to the inclination of the generality of the people ever since the reformation they haveing reformed from popery by Presbiters and therefore ought to be abolished Lykeas by ane Act of the last Session of this Parliament Prelacie is abolished Therefore Their Majesties with advyce and consent of the saids three Estates Doe hereby revive ratifie and perpetually confirme all lawes statutes and acts of Parliament made against popery and papists and for the maintenance and preservation of the true reformed protestant religion and for the true Church of Christ within this kingdom In swa far as they confirme the same or are made in favours thereof Lykeas they by these presents Ratifie and establish the Confession of faith now read in their presence and voted and approven be them as the publick and avowed Confession of this Church containeing the summe and substance of the doctrine of the reformed Churches which Confession of faith is subjoyned to this present Act As also They doe establish Ratifie and confirme the presbyterian Church Government and

Changes to legislation: *There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Confession of Faith Ratification Act 1690. (See end of Document for details)*

discipline That is to say the Government of the Church by Kirke sessions presbyteries provinciall synods and Generall assemblies ratified and established by the 114 Act Ja: 6: parl: 12: Anno 1592 Entituled Ratification of the Liberty of the true kirke &c. And thereafter received by the generall consent of this Nation to be the only government of Christs Church within this Kingdome Reviveing Renewing and Confirmeing the forsaid act of Parliament in the haill heids thereof, except that part of it relateing to patronages which is hereafter to be taken into consideration And Rescinding Annulling and makeing voyd the Acts of Parliament following videlicet Act anent restitution of Bishops: Ja. 6: Parl. 18. Cap 2d Act Ratifieing the acts of the assembly 1610 Ja. 6. Parl: 21 Cap. 1st Act anent the Election of Archbishops and Bishops Ja: 6: Par: 22: Cap. 1st Act Entituled Ratification of the fyve articles of the generall assembly at Perth Ja: 6: Parl: 23: Cap: 1st Act Entituled for the restitution and re-establishment of the Ancient Government of the Church by Archbishops and Bishops Char : 2 : Par: 1st Sess: 2: Act 1st Act anent the Constitution of a national synod Char: 2: Par: 1st Sess: 3d Act 5th Act agt such as refuse to depone against delinquents Char: 2: Par: 2d: Sess: 2d: Act 2d Act entituled Act acknowledging and asserting the right of succession to the Imperiall Crowne of Scotland Char: 2: Par: 3d act 2d Act entituled Act anent Religion and the Test Char: 2d Par: 3, Act 6th with all other Acts Lawes statutes ordinances and proclamationes And that in sua far allennerly as the saids Acts and others generally and particularly above mentioned are contrary or prejudiciall to Inconsistent with or derogatory from the protestant Religion and presbyterian Government now established And allowing and Declareing that the Church Government be established in the hands of and exercised by these presbyterian ministers who were outed since the first of January 1661 for nonconformity to prelacie or not complying with the courses of the tyme and are now restored by the late Act of Parliament and such ministers and elders only as they have admitted or received or shall hereafter admitt or receave and also that all the said Presbiterian Ministers have and shall have right to the maintenance, rights and other priveledges by Law provyded to the ministers of Christs Church within this kingdom as they are or shall be legally admitted to particular Churches . . . [F1] And to the effect the disorders that have hapned in this Church may be redressed Their Majesties with advyce and consent forsaid Doe hereby allow the Generall meeting and representatives of the forsaid presbyterian ministers and Elders in whose hands the exercise of the Church Government is established either by themselves or by such Ministers and elders as shall be appointed and authorised visitors by them according to the custom and practise of Presbyterian Government throughout the whole kingdom and severall parts thereof to try and purge out all Insufficient, negligent, scandalous and erroneous Ministers by due course of ecclesiasticall processes and censures and likewayes for redressing all other Church disorders And further it is hereby provyded that whatsoever Minister being conveened before the said Generall meeting and representatives of the presbyterian ministers and elders or the visitors to be appointed by them shall either prove contumacious in not compearing or be found guilty and shall be therefore censured whether by suspension or deposition they shall ipso facto be suspended from or depryved of their stipends and benefices And ordaines this Act to be printed and published

Textual Amendments

F1 Words repealed by Statute Law Revision (Scotland) Act 1906 (c. 38)

THE CONFESSION OF FAITH under written was this day produced read and considered word by word in presence of their Majesties High Commissioner and the

Estates of Parliament and being voted and approven was ordained to be recorded in the bookes of Parliament off the which CONFESSION OF FAITH the Tenor followes

CHAP. I. OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURE S

ALTHOUGH the light of Nature and works of Creation and Providence do so far manifest the goodness wisdom and power of God as to leave men inexcusable yet are they not sufficient to give that knowledge of God and of his will which is necessary unto salvation Therefore it pleased the Lord at sundry times and in divers maners to reveal himself and to declare that his will unto his Church and afterwards for the better preserving and propagating of the truth and for the more sure establishment and comfort of the Church against the corruption of the flesh and the malice of Satan and of the world to commit the same wholly unto writing which maketh the Holy Scripture to be most necessary those former wayes of Gods revealing his will unto his people being now ceased

2 S

UNDER the name of the Holy Scripture or the word of God written are now contained all the books of the Old and New Testament which are these Of The Old Testament Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy Joshua Judges Ruth I Samuel II Samuel I Kings II Kings I Chronicles II Chronicles Ezra Nehemiah Esther Job Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes The Song of Songs Isaiah Jeremiah Lamentations Ezekiel Daniel Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah Jonah Micah Nahum Habbakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi Of The New Testament The Gospels according to Matthew Mark Luke John The Acts of the Apostles Pauls Epistles to the Romans I Corinthians II Corinthians Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians I Thessalonians II Thessalonians I to Timothy II to Timothy to Titus to Philemon The Epistle to the Hebrews The Epistle of James The first and second Epistles of Peter The first second and third Epistles of John The Epistle of Jude The Revelation of John All which are given by inspiration of God to be the rule of faith and life

3 S

THE Books commonly called Apocrypha not being of divine inspiration are no part of the Canon of the Scripture and therefore are of no authority in the Church of God nor to be any otherwise approved or made use of than other human writings

4 S

THE authority of the Holy Scripture for which it ought to be believed and obeyed dependeth not upon the testimony of any man or Church but wholly upon God (who is truth it self) the author thereof and therefore it is to be received because it is the Word of God

5 S

We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the Church to an high and reverent esteem of the Holy Scripture And the heavenliness of the matter the efficacy of the doctrine the majesty of the style the consent of all the parts the scope of the whole

(which is to give all glory to God) the full discovery it makes of the only way of mans salvation the many other incomparable excellencies and the entire perfection thereof are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence it self to be the Word of God yet notwithstanding our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority thereof is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts

6 S

The whole counsell of God concerning all things necessary for his own glory mans salvation faith and life is either expresly 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 nevertheless 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 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 always to be observed

7 S

ALL things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves nor alike clear unto all yet those things which are necessary to be known believed and observed for salvation are so clearly propounded and opened in some place of Scripture or other that not only the learned but the unlearned in a due use of the ordinary means may attain to a sufficient understanding of them

8 S

THE OLD Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old) and the New Testament in Greek (which at the time of the writing of it was most generally known to the nations) being immediatly inspired by God and by his singular care and providence kept pure in all ages are therefore authenticall so as in all controversies of Religion the Church is finally to appeal unto them but because these originall tongues are not known to all the people of God who have right unto and interest in the Scriptures and are commanded in the fear of God to read and search them therefore they are to be translated into the vulgar language of every nation unto which they come that the word of God dwelling plentifully in all they may worship him in an acceptable manner and through patience and comfort of the Scriptures may have hope

9 S

THE infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture it self and therefore when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture (which is not manifold but one) it must be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly

10 S

THE supreme judge by which all controversies of Religion are to be determined and all decrees of Councills opinions of ancient writers doctrines of men and private spirits are to be examined and in whose sentence we are to rest can be no other but the holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture

CHAP. II. OF GOD AND THE HOLY TRINITY S

1 S

THERE is but one only living and true God who is infinite in being and perfection a most pure spirit invisible without body parts or passions immutable immense eternall incomprehensible almighty most wise most holy most free most absolute working all things according to the councill of his own immutable and most righteous will for his own glory most loving gracious mercifull long suffering abundant in goodness and truth forgiving iniquity transgression and sin the rewarder of them that diligently seek him and withall most just and terrible in his judgements hating all sin and who will by no means clear the guilty

2 S

GOD hath all life glory goodness blessedness in and of himself and is alone in and unto himself all sufficient not standing in need of any creatures which he hath made nor deriving any glory from them but only manifesting his own glory in by unto and upon them He is the alone fountain of all being of whom through whom and to whom are all things and hath most soveraign dominion over them to do by them for them or upon them whatsoever himself pleaseth In his sight all things are open and manifest his knowledge is infinite infallible and independent upon the creature so as to him nothing is contingent or uncertain He is most holy in all his councills in all his works and in all his commands To him is due from angels and men and every other creature whatsoever worship service or obedience he is pleased to require of them

3 S

IN the unity of the Godhead there be three persons of one substance power and eternity God the Father God the Son and God the Holy Ghost The Father is of none neither begotten nor proceeding the Son is eternally begotten of the Father the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son

CHAP. III. OF GODS ETERNAL DECREE S

1 S

GOD from all eternity did by the most wise and holy councill of his own will freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass yet so as thereby neither is God the author of sin nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away but rather established

2 S

ALTHOUGH God knows whatsoever may or can come to pass upon all supposed conditions yet hath he not decreed any thing because he foresaw it as future or as that which would come to pass upon such conditions

3 S

BY the decree of God for the manifestation of his glory some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life and others foreordained to everlasting death

4 S

THOSE angels and men thus predestinated and foreordained are particularly and unchangeably designed and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished

5 S

THOSE of mankind that are predestinated unto life God before the foundation of the world was laid according to his eternall and immutable purpose and the secret councill and good pleasure of his will hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory out of his meer free grace and love without any foresight of faith or good works or perseverance in either of them or any other thing in the creature as conditions or causes moving him thereunto and all to the praise of his glorious Grace

6 S

AS God hath appointed the elect unto glory so hath he by the eternall and most free purpose of his will foreordained all the means thereunto Wherefore they who are elected being fallen in Adam are redeemed by Christ are effectually called unto faith in Christ by his Spirit working in due season are justified adopted sanctified and kept by his power through faith unto salvation neither are any other redeemed by Christ effectually called justified adopted sanctified and saved but the elect only

7 S

THE rest of mankind God was pleased according to the unsearchable councill of his own good will whereby he extendeth or withholdeth mercy as he pleaseth for the glory of his soveraign power over his creatures to pass by and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sin to the praise of his glorious justice

8 S

THE doctrine of this high mystery of Predestination is to be handled with speciall prudence and care that men attending the will of God revealed in his word and yielding obedience thereunto may from the certainty of their effectuall vocation be assured of their eternall election So shall this doctrine afford matter of praise reverence and admiration of God and of humility diligence and abundant consolation to all that sincerely obey the Gospell

CHAP. IV. OF CREATION S

1 S

IT pleased God the Father Son and Holy Ghost for the manifestation of the glory of his eternal power wisdom and goodness in the beginning to create or make of nothing the world and all things therein whether visible or invisible in the space of six days and all very good

2 S

AFTER God had made all other creatures he created man male and female with reasonable and immortall souls and indued with knowledge righteousness and true holiness after his own image having the Law of God written in their hearts and power to fullfill it and yet under a possibility of transgressing being left to the liberty of their own will which was subject unto change Besyde this law written in their hearts they received a command not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil which whilst they kept they were happy in their communion with God and had dominion over the creatures

CHAP. V. OF PROVIDENCE S

1 S

GOD the great Creator of all things doth uphold direct dispose and governe all creatures actions and things from the greatest even to the least by his most wise and holy providence according to his infallible foreknowledge and the free and immutable councill of his own will to the praise of the glory of his wisdom power justice goodness and mercy

2 S

ALTHOUGH in relation to the foreknowledge and decree of God the first cause all things come to pass immutably and infallibly yet by the same providence he ordereth them to fall out according to the nature of second causes either necessarily freely or contingently

3 S

GOD in his ordinary providence maketh use of means yet is free to work without above and against them at his pleasure

4 S

THE Almighty power unsearchable wisdom and infinite goodness of God so far manifest themselves in his providence that it extendeth it self even to the first fall and all other sins of angels and men and that not by a bare permission but such as hath joyned with it a most wise and powerfull bounding and otherwayes ordering and governing of them in a manifold dispensation to his own holy ends yet so as the sinfullness thereof proceedeth only from the creature and not from God who being most holy and righteous neither is nor can be the author or approver of sin

5 S

THE most wise righteous and gracious God doth often times leave for a season his own children to manifold temptations and the corruption of their own hearts to chastise them for their former sins or to discover unto them the hidden strength of corruption and deceitfullness of their hearts that they may be humbled and to raise them to a more close and constant dependence for their support upon himself and to make them more watchfull against all future occasions of sin and for sundry other just and holy ends

6 S

AS for those wicked and ungodly men whom God as a righteous judge for former sins doth blind and harden from them he not only withholdeth his grace whereby they might have been enlightned in their understandings and wrought upon in their hearts but sometimes also withdraweth the gifts which they had and exposeth them to such objects as their corruption makes occasions of sin and withall gives them over to their own lusts the temptations of the world and the power of Satan whereby it comes to pass that they harden themselves even under those means which God useth for the softening of others

7 S

AS the providence of God doth in generall reach to all creatures so after a more speciall manner it taketh care of his church and disposeth all things to the good thereof

CHAP. VI. OF THE FALL OF MAN OF SIN AND OF THE PUNISHMENT THEREOF S

1 S

OUR first parents being seduced by the subtilty and temptation of Satan sinned in eating the forbidden fruit This their sin God was pleased according to his wise and holy councill to permit having purposed to order it to his own glory

2 S

BY this sin they fell from their originall righteousness and communion with God and so became dead in sin and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body

3 S

THEY being the root of all mankind the guilt of this sin was imputed and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation

4 S

FROM this originall corruption whereby we are utterly indisposed disabled and made opposite to all good and wholly inclined to all evil do proceed all actuall transgressions

5 S

THIS corruption of nature during this life doth remain in those that are regenerated and although it be through Christ pardoned and mortified yet both it self and all the motions thereof are truly and properly sin

6 S

EVERY sin both original and actuall being a transgression of the righteous law of God and contrary thereunto doth in its own nature bring guilt upon the sinner whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God and curse of the law and so made subject to death with all miseries spirituall temporall and eternall

CHAP. VII. OF GODS COVENANT WITH MAN S

1 S

THE distance between God and the creature is so great that although reasonable creatures do owe obedience unto him as their Creator yet they could never have any fruition of him as their blessedness and reward but by some voluntary condescension on Gods part which he hath been pleased to express by way of Covenant

2 S

THE first Covenant made with man was a Covenant of Works wherein life was promised to Adam and in him to his posterity upon condition of perfect and personall obedience

3 S

MAN by his fall having made himself uncapable of life by that Covenant the Lord was pleased to make a second commonly called the Covenant of Grace wherein he freely offered unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ requiring of them faith in him that they may be saved and promising to give unto all those that are ordained unto life his holy Spirit to make them willing and able to believe

4 S

THIS Covenant of Grace is frequently set forth in the Scripture by the name of a Testament in reference to the death of Jesus Christ the Testator and to the everlasting inheritance with all things belonging to it therein bequeathed

5 S

THIS Covenant was differently administred in the time of the Law and in the time of the Gospell under the Law it was administred by promises prophesies sacrifices circumcision the paschall lamb and other types and ordinances delivered to the people of the Jews all foresignifying Christ to come which were for that time sufficient and efficacious through the operation of the Spirit to instruct and build up the elect in faith in the promised Messiah by whom they had full remission of sins and eternall salvation and is called the Old Testament

6 S

UNDER the Gospell when Christ the substance was exhibited the ordinances in which his Covenant is dispensed are the preaching of the word and the administration of the sacraments of Baptism and the Lords Supper which though fewer in number and administred with more simplicity and less outward glory yet in them it is held forth in more fullness evidence and spirituall efficacy to all nations both Jews and Gentiles and is called the New Testament There are not therefore two Covenants of Grace differing in substance but one and the same under various dispensations

CHAP. VIII. OF CHRIST THE MEDIATOR S

1 S

IT pleased God in his eternall purpose to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus his only begotten Son to be the mediator between God and man the prophet priest and king the head and saviour of his Church the heir of all things and judge of the world unto whom he did from all eternity give a people to be his seed and to be by him in time redeemed called justified sanctified and glorified

2 S

THE Son of God the second person of the Trinity being very and eternall God of one substance and equall with the Father did when the fullness of time was come take upon him mans nature with all the essentiall properties and common infirmities thereof yet without sin being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the virgin Mary of her substance So that two whole perfect and distinct natures the Godhead and the Manhood were inseparably joyned together in one Person without conversion composition or confusion Which person is very God and very Man yet one Christ the only mediator between God and Man

3 S

THE Lord Jesus in his human nature thus united to the divine was sanctified and anointed with the holy Spirit above measure having in him all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in whom it pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell to the end that being holy harmless and undefiled and full of grace and truth he might be thoroughly furnished to execute the office of a Mediator and Surety which office he took not unto himself, but was thereunto called by his Father who put all power and judgement into his hand and gave him commandment to execute the same

4 S

THIS office the Lord Jesus did most willingly undertake which that he might discharge he was made under the Law and did perfectly fulfill it endured most grievous torments immediately in his soul and most painfull sufferings in his body was crucified and died was buried and remained under the power of death yet saw no corruption on the third day he rose from the dead with the same body in which he suffered with which also he ascended into heaven and there sitteth at the right hand of his Father making intercession and shall return to judge men and angels at the end of the world

5 S

THE Lord Jesus by his perfect obedience and sacrifice of himself which he through the eternall Spirit once offered up unto God hath fully satisfied the justice of his Father and purchased not only reconciliation but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven for all those whom the Father hath given unto him

6 S

ALTHOUGH the work of redemption was not actually wrought by Christ till after his incarnation yet the virtue efficacy and benefits thereof were communicated unto the elect in all ages successively from the beginning of the world in and by those promises types and sacrifices wherein he was revealed and signified to be the seed of the woman which should bruise the serpents head and the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world being yesterday and to day the same and for ever

7 S

CHRIST in the work of mediation acteth according to both natures by each nature doing that which is proper to it self yet by reason of the unity of the person that which is proper to one nature is sometimes in Scripture attributed to the person denominated by the other nature

8 S

TO all those for whom Christ hath purchased redemption he doth certainly and effectually apply and communicate the same making intercession for them and revealing unto them in and by the word the mysteries of salvation effectually persuading them by his spirit to believe and obey and governing their hearts by his word and spirit overcoming all their enemies by his almighty power and wisdom in such manner and wayes as are most consonant to his wonderfull and unsearcheable dispensation

CHAP. IX. OF FREE WILL S

1 S

GOD hath indued the will of man with that naturall liberty that is neither forced nor by any absolute necessity of nature determined to do good or evill

2 S

MAN in his state of innocency had freedom and power to will and to do that which was good and well pleasing to God but yet mutably so that he might fall from it

3 S

MAN by his fall into a state of sin hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spirituall good accompanying salvation so as a naturall man being altogether averse from that good and dead in sin is not able by his own strength to convert himself or to prepare himself thereunto

4 S

WHEN God converts a sinner and translates him into the state of grace he freeth him from his naturall bondage under sin and by his grace alone enables him freely to will and to do that which is spiritually good yet so as that by reason of his remaining corruption he doth not perfectly nor only will that which is good but doth also will that which is evil

5 S

THE will of man is made perfectly and immutably free to do good alone in the state of Glory only

CHAP. X. OF EFFECTUALL CALLING S

1 S

ALL those whom God hath predestinated unto life and those only he is pleased in his appointed and accepted time effectually to call by his word and Spirit out of that estate of sin and death in which they are by nature to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ inlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God taking away their heart of stone and giving unto them an heart of flesh renewing their wills and by his almighty power determining them to that which is good and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ yet so as they come most freely being made willing by his grace

2 S

THIS effectuall call is of Gods free and speciall grace alone not from any thing at all foreseen in man who is altogether passive therein untill being quickened and renewed by the holy Spirit he is thereby enabled to answer this call and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it

3 S

ELECT infants dying in infancy are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit who worketh when and where and how he pleaseth so also are all other elect persons who are uncapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the word

4 S

OTHERS not elected although they may be called by the ministry of the word and may have some common operations of the Spirit yet they never truly come unto Christ and therefore cannot be saved much less can men not professing the Christian Religion be saved in any other way whatsoever be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature and the law of that religion they do profess and to assert and maintain that they may is very pernicious and to be detested

CHAP. XI. OF JUSTIFICATION S

1 S

THOSE whom God effectually calleth he also freely justifieth not by infusing righteousness into them but by pardoning their sins and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous not for any thing wrought in them or done by them but for Christs sake alone nor by imputing faith it self the act of believing or any other evangelicall obedience to them as their righteousness but by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto them they reciveing and resting on him and his righteousness by faith which faith they have not of themselves it is the gift of God

2 S

FAITH thus reciveing and resting on Christ and his righteousness is the alone instrument of justification yet it is not alone in the person justified but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces and is no dead faith but worketh by love

3 S

CHRIST by his obedience and death did fully discharge the debt of all those that are thus justified and did make a proper reall and full satisfaction to his Fathers justice in their behalf yet in as much as he was given by the Father for them and his obedience and satisfaction accepted in their stead and both freely not for any thing in them their justification is only of free grace that both the exact justice and rich grace of God might be glorified in the justification of sinners

4 S

GOD did from all eternity decree to justify all the elect and Christ did in the fullness of time die for their sins and rise again for their justification nevertheless they are not justified untill the holy spirit doth in due time actually apply Christ unto them

5 S

GOD doth continue to forgive the sins of those that are justified and although they can never fall from the state of justification yet they may by their sins fall under Gods fatherly displeasure and not have the light of his countenance restored unto them untill they humble themselves confess their sins beg pardon and renew their faith and repentance

6 S

THE justification of believers under the Old Testament was in all these respects one and the same with the justification of believers under the New Testament

CHAP. XII. OF ADOPTION S

1 S

ALL those that are justified God vouchsafeth in and for his only son Jesus Christ to make partakers of the grace of adoption by which they are taken into the number and enjoy the liberties and priviledges of the children of God have his name put upon them receive the spirit of adoption have access to the throne of grace with boldness are enabled to cry Abba Father are pitied protected provided for and chastened by him as by a father yet never cast off but sealed to the day of redemption and inherit the promises as heirs of everlasting salvation

CHAP. XIII. OF SANCTIFICATION S

1 S

THEY who are effectually called and regenerated having a new heart and a new spirit created in them are further sanctified really and personally through the virtue of Christs death and resurrection by his word and spirit dwelling in them the dominion of the whole body of sin is destroyed and the severall lusts thereof are more and more weakened and mortified and they more and more quickened and strengthened in all saving graces to the practise of true holiness without which no man shall see the Lord

2 S

THIS sanctification is throughout in the whole man yet imperfect in this life there abideth still some remnants of corruption in every part whence ariseth a continuall and irreconcileable war the flesh lusting against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh

3 S

IN which war although the remaining corruption for a time may much prevail yet through the continuall supply of strength from the sanctifying spirit of Christ the regenerate part doth overcome and so the saints grow in grace perfecting holiness in the fear of God

CHAP. XIV. OF SAVING FAITH S

1 S

THE grace of faith whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls is the work of the spirit of Christ in their hearts and is ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the word by which also and by the administration of the sacraments and prayer it is increased and strengthened

2 S

BY this faith a christian believeth to be true whatsoever is revealed in the word from the authority of God himself speaking therein and acteth differently upon that which each particular passage thereof containeth yielding obedience to the commands

trembling at the threatnings and embraceing the promises of God for this life and that which is to come But the principall acts of saving faith are accepting receiving and resting upon Christ alone for justification sanctification and eternall life by virtue of the Covenant of Grace

3 S

THIS faith is different in degrees weak or strong may be often and many wayes assailed and weakened but gets the victory growing up in many to the attainment of a full assurance through Christ who is both the author and finisher of our faith

CHAP. XV. OF REPENTANCE UNTO LIFE S

1 S

REPENTANCE unto life is an evangelicall grace the doctrine whereof is to be preached by every minister of the Gospell

2 S

BY it a sinner out of the sight and sense not only of the danger but also of the filthiness and odiousness of his sins as contrary to the holy nature and righteous law of God and upon the apprehension of his mercy in Christ to such as are penitent so grieves for and hates his sins as to turn from them all unto God purposing and endeavouring to walk with him in all the wayes of his commandments

3 S

ALTHOUGH repentance be not to be rested in as any satisfaction for sin or any cause of the pardon thereof which is the act of Gods free grace in Christ yet is it of such necessity to all sinners that none may expect pardon without it

4 S

AS there is no sin so small but it deserves damnation so there is no sin so great that it can bring damnation upon those who truely repent

5 S

MEN ought not to content themselves with a generall repentance but it is every mans duty to endeavour to repent of his particular sins particularly

6 S

AS every man is bound to make private confession of his sins to God praying for the pardon thereof upon which and the forsaking of them he shall find mercy so he that scandalizeth his brother or the church of Christ ought to be willing by a private or publick confession and sorrow for his sins to declare his repentance to those that are offended who are thereupon to be reconciled to him and in love to receive him

CHAP. XVI. OF GOOD WORKS S

1 S

GOOD works are only such as God hath commanded in his Word and not such as without the warrant thereof are devysed by men out of blind zeal or upon pretence of good intention

2 S

THOSE good works done in obedience to Gods commandments are the fruits and evidences of a true and lively faith and by them believers manifest their thankfulness strengthen their assurance edify their brethren adorn the profession of the Gospell stop the mouths of the adversaries and glorify God whose workmanship they are created in Christ Jesus thereunto that having their fruit unto holiness they may have in the end eternall life

3 S

THEIR ability to do good works is not at all of themselves but wholly from the spirit of Christ And that they may be enabled thereunto besides the graces they have already received there is required an actuall influence of the same holy Spirit to work in them to will and to do of his good pleasure yet are they not hereupon to grow negligent as if they were not bound to perform any duty unless upon a speciall motion of the spirit but they ought to be diligent in stirring up the grace of God that is in them

4 S

THEY who in their obedience attain to the greatest height which is possible in this life are so far from being able to supererogate and to do more then God requires as that they fall short of much which in duty they are bound to do

5 S

WE cannot by our best works merit pardon of sin or eternall life at the hand of God by reason of the great disproportion that is between them and the glory to come and the infinite distance that is between us and God whom by them we can neither profit nor satisfy for the debt of our former sins but when we have done all we can we have done but our duty and are unprofitable servants and because as they are good they proceed from his Spirit and as they are wrought by us they are defiled and mixed with so much weakness and imperfection that they cannot endure the severity of God's judgement

6 S

YET notwithstanding the persons of believers being accepted through Christ their good works also are accepted in him not as though they were in this life wholly unblameable and unreproveable in Gods sight but that he looking upon them in his Son is pleased to accept and reward that which is sincere although accompanied with many weaknesses and imperfections

7 S

WORKS done by unregenerate men although for the matter of them they may be things which God commands and of good use both to themselves and others yet because they proceed not from a heart purified by faith nor are done in a right manner according to the Word nor to a right end the glory of God they are therefore sinfull and cannot please God or make a man meet to receive grace from God and yet their neglect of them is more sinfull and displeasing unto God

CHAP. XVII. OF THE PERSERVERANCE OF THE SAINTS S

1 S

THEY whom God hath accepted in his beloved effectually called and sanctified by his Spirit can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace but shall certainly persevere therein to the end and be eternally saved

2 S

THIS perseverance of the saints depends not upon their own free will but upon the immutability of the decree of election flowing from the free and unchangeable love of God the Father upon the efficacy of the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ the abiding of the Spirit and of the seed of God within them and the nature of the Covenant of Grace from all which ariseth also the certainty and infallibility thereof

3 S

NEVERTHELESS they may through the temptations of Satan and of the world the prevalancy of corruption remaining in them and the neglect of the means of their preservation fall into grievous sins and for a time continue therein whereby they incur Gods displeasure and grieve his holy Spirit come to be deprived of some measure of their graces and comforts have their hearts hardened and their consciences wounded hurt and scandalize others and bring temporall judgments upon themselves

CHAP. XVIII. OF THE ASSURANCE OF GRACE AND SALVATION S

1 S

ALTHOUGH hypocrites and other unregenerate men may vainly deceive themselves with false hopes and carnall presumptions of being in the favor of God and estate of salvation which hope of theirs shall perish yet such as truly believe in the Lord Jesus and love him in sincerity endeavouring to walk in all good conscience before him may in this life be certainly assured that they are in the state of grace and may rejoyce in the hope of the glory of God which hope shall never make them ashamed

2 S

THIS certainty is not a bare conjecturall and probable persuasion grounded upon a fallible hope but an infallible assurance of faith founded upon the divine truth of the promises of salvation the inward evidence of those graces unto which these promises

are made the testimony of the spirit of adoption witnessing with our spirits that we are the children of God which spirit is the earnest of our inheritance whereby we are sealed to the day of redemption

3 S

THIS infallible assurance doth not so belong to the essence of faith but that a true believer may wait long and conflict with many difficulties before he be partaker of it yet being enabled by the spirit to know the things which are freely given him of God he may without extraordinary revelation in the right use of ordinary means attain thereunto and therefore it is the duty of every one to give all diligence to make his calling and election sure that thereby his heart may be enlarged in peace and joy in the Holy Ghost in love and thankfulness to God and in strength and cheerfulness in the duties of obedience the proper fruits of this assurance so far is it from inclining men to looseness

4 S

TRUE believers may have the assurance of their salvation divers ways shaken diminished and intermitted as by negligence in preserving of it by falling into some speciall sin which woundeth the conscience and grieveth the spirit by some sudden or vehement temptation by Gods withdrawing the light of his countenance and suffering even such as fear him to walk in darkness and to have no light yet are they never utterly destitute of the seed of God and life of faith that love of Christ and the brethren that sincerity of heart and conscience of duty out of which by the operation of the spirit this assurance may in due time be revived and by the which in the mean time they are supported from utter despair

CHAP. XIX. OF THE LAW OF GOD S

1 S

GOD gave to Adam a Law as a Covenant of Works by which he bound him and all his posterity to personall entire exact and perpetuall obedience promised life upon the fulfilling and threatned death upon the breach of it and endued him with power and ability to keep it

2 S

THIS Law after his fall continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness and as such was delivered by God upon Mount Sinai in ten commandments and written in two tables the four first commandments containing our duty towards God and the other six our duty to man

3 S

BESIDE this Law commonly called Moral God was pleased to give the people of Israel as a Church under age Ceremoniall Laws containing severall typicall ordinances partly of worship prefiguring Christ his graces actions sufferings and benefits and partly holding forth divers instructions of moral duties all which Ceremoniall Laws are now abrogated under the New Testament

4 S

TO them also as a body politick he gave sundry judiciall laws which expired together with the state of that people not obliging any other now further then the generall equity thereof may require

5 S

THE Moral Law doth for ever bind all as well justified persons as others to the obedience therof and that not only in regard of the matter contained in it but also in respect of the authority of God the Creator who gave it neither doth Christ in the gospell any way dissolve but much strengthen this obligation

6 S

ALTHOUGH true believers be not under the Law as a Covenant of Works to be thereby justified or condemned yet it is of great use to them as well as to others in that as a rule of life informing them of the will of God and their duty it directs and binds them to walk accordingly discovering also the sinfull pollutions of their nature hearts and lives so as examining themselves thereby they may come to further conviction of humiliation for and hatred against sin together with a clearer sight of the need they have of Christ and the perfection of his obedience It is likewise of use to the regenerate to restrain their corruptions in that it forbids sin and the threatnings of it serve to shew what even their sins deserve and what afflictions in this life they may expect for them although freed from the curse thereof threatned in the Law The promises of it in like manner shew them Gods approbation of obedience and what blessings they may expect upon the performance thereof although not as due to them by the Law as a Covenant of Works so as a mans doing good and refraining from evil because the law encourageth to the one and deterreth from the other is no evidence of his being under the Law and not under Grace

7 S

NEITHER are the forementioned uses of the Law contrary to the grace of the Gospell but do sweetly comply with it the spirit of Christ subduing and enabling the will of man to do that freely and cheerfully which the will of God revealed in the Law requireth to be done

CHAP. XX. OF CHRISTIAN LIBERTY AND LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE S

1 S

THE liberty which Christ hath purchased for believers under the Gospell consists in their freedom from the guilt of sin the condemning wrath of God the curse of the Moral Law and in their being delivered from this present evil world bondage to Satan and dominion of sin from the evil of afflictions the sting of death the victory of the grave and everlasting damnation as also in their free access to God and their yielding obedience unto him not out of slavish fear but a child-like love and willing mind all which were common also to believers under the Law But under the New Testament the liberty of Christians is further enlarged in their freedom from the yoke of the Ceremoniall Law to which the Jewish Church was subjected and in greater boldness

of access to the throne of grace and in fuller communication of the free spirit of God than believers under the Law did ordinarily partake of

2 S

GOD alone is Lord of the conscience and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are in any thing contrary to his Word or beside it in matters of faith or worship so that to believe such doctrines or to obey such commands out of conscience is to betray true liberty of conscience and the requiring of an implicit faith and an absolute and blind obedience is to destroy liberty of conscience and reason also

3 S

THEY who upon pretence of Christian liberty do practise any sin or cherish any lust do thereby destroy the end of Christian liberty which is that being delivered out of the hands of our enemies we might serve the Lord without fear in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life

4 S

AND because the powers which God hath ordained and the liberty which Christ hath purchased are not intended by God to destroy but mutually to uphold and preserve one another they who upon pretence of Christian liberty shall oppose any lawfull power or the lawfull exercise of it whether it be civil or ecclesiasticall resist the ordinance of God and for their publishing of such opinions or maintaining of such practises as are contrary to the light of nature or to the known principles of Christianity whether concerning faith worship or conversation or to the power of godliness or such erroneous opinions or practises as either in their own nature or in the manner of publishing or maintaining them are destructive to the externall peace and order which Christ hath established in the Church they may be lawfully called to account and proceeded against by the censures of the Church and by the power of the civil Magistrate

CHAP. XXI. OF RELIGIOUS WORSHIP AND THE SABBATH DAY S

1 S

THE light of nature sheweth that there is a God who hath lordship and soveraignity over all is good and doth good unto all and is therefore to be feared loved praised called upon trusted in and served with all the heart and with all the soul and with all the might But the acceptable way of worshipping the true God is instituted by himself and so limited by his own revealed will that he may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men or the suggestions of Satan under any visible representation or any other way not prescribed in the holy Scripture

2 S

RELIGIOUS worship is to be given to God the Father Son and Holy Ghost and to him alone not to angells saints or any other creature and since the fall not without a mediator nor in the mediation of any other but of Christ alone

3 S

PRAYER with thanksgiving being one speciall part of religious worship is by God required of all men and that it may be accepted it is to be made in the name of the Son by the help of his spirit according to his will with understanding reverence humility fervency faith love and perseverance and if vocall in a known tongue

4 S

PRAYER is to be made for things lawfull and for all sorts of men living or that shall live hereafter but not for the dead nor for those of whom it may be known that they have sinned the sin unto death

5 S

THE reading of the Scriptures with godly fear the sound preaching and conscionable hearing of the word in obedience unto God with understanding faith and reverence singing of psalms with grace in the heart as also the due administration and worthy receiving of the Sacraments instituted by Christ are all parts of the ordinary religious worship of God beside religious oaths vows solemn fastings and thanksgivings upon speciall occasions which are in their severall times and seasons to be used in an holy and religious manner

6 S

NEITHER prayer nor any other part of religious worship is now under the Gospell either tyed unto or made more acceptable by any place in which it is performed or towards which it is directed but God is to be worshipped every where in spirit and truth as in private families daily and in secret each one by himself so more solemnly in the publick assemblies which are not carelessly or wilfully to be neglected or forsaken when God by his word or providence calleth thereunto

7 S

AS it is of the law of nature that in generall a due proportion of time be set apart for the worship of God so in his word by a positive morall and perpetuall commandment binding all men in all ages he hath particularly appointed one day in seven for a Sabbath to be kept holy unto him which from the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ was the last day of the week and from the resurrection of Christ was changed into the first day of the week which in Scripture is called the Lords day and is to be continued to the end of the world as the Christian Sabbath.

8 S

THIS Sabbath is then kept holy unto the Lord when men after a due preparing of their hearts and ordering of their common affairs before hand do not only observe a holy rest all the day from their own works words and thoughts about their worldly employments and recreations but also are taken up the whole time in the publick and private exercises of his worship and in the duties of necessity and mercy

Changes to legislation: *There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Confession of Faith Ratification Act 1690. (See end of Document for details)*

CHAP. XXII. OF LAWFULL OATHS AND VOWS S

1 S

A lawfull oath is a part of religious worship wherein upon just occasion the person swearing solemnly calleth God to witnes what he asserteth or promiseth and to judge him according to the truth or falshood of what he sweareth

2 S

THE name of God only is that by which men ought to swear and therein it is to be used with all holy fear and reverence therefore to swear vainly or rashly by that glorious and dreadfull name or to swear at all by any other thing is sinfull and to be abhorred Yet as in matters of weight and moment an oath is warranted by the word of God under the New Testament as well as under the Old so a lawfull oath being imposed by lawfull authority in such matters ought to be taken

3 S

WHOSOEVER taketh an oath ought duely to consider the weightiness of so solemn an act and thereunto avouch nothing but what he is fully persauded is the truth neither may any man bind himself by oath to any thing but what is good and just and what he believeth so to be and what he is able and resolved to perform yet it is a sin to refuse an oath touching anything that is good and just being imposed by lawfull authority

4 S

AN oath is to be taken in the plain and common sense of the words without equivocation or mentall reservation It cannot oblige to sin but in any thing not sinfull being taken it binds to performance although to a mans own hurt nor is it to be violated although made to hereticks or infidels

5 S

A vow is of the like nature with a promissory oath and ought to be made with the like religious care and to be performed with the like faithfullness

6 S

IT is not to be made to any creature but to God alone and that it may be accepted it is to be made voluntarily out of faith and conscience of duty in way of thankfulness for mercy received or for the obtaining of what we want whereby we more strictly bind ourselves to necessary duties or to other things so far and so long as they may fitly conduce thereunto

7 S

NO man may vow to do any thing forbidden in the Word of God or what would hinder any duty therein commanded or which is not in his own power and for the performance whereof he hath no promise of ability from God in which respects popish monasticall vows of perpetuall single life professed poverty and regular obedience are so far from

being degrees of higher perfection that they are superstitious and sinfull snares in which no Christian may intangle himself

CHAP. XXIII. OF THE CIVIL MAGISTRATE S

1 S

GOD the supreme Lord and King of all the world hath ordained Civil Magistrats to be under him over the people for his own glory and the publick good and to this end hath armed them with the power of the sword for the defence and encouragement of them that are good and for the punishment of evil doers

2 S

IT is lawfull for Christians to accept and execute the office of a magistrate when called thereunto in the managing whereof as they ought especially to maintain piety justice and peace according to the wholesome laws of each Commonwealth so for that end they may lawfully now under the New Testament wage war upon just and necessary occasion

3 S

THE civil Magistrate may not assume to himself the administration of the word and sacraments or the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven yet he hath authority and it is his duty to take order that unity and peace be preserved in the Church that the truth of God be kept pure and entire that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed all corruptions and abuses in worship and discipline prevented or reformed and all the ordinances of God duly settled administred and observed for the better effecting whereof he hath power to call synods to be present at them and to provide that whatsoever is transacted in them be according to the mind of God

4 S

IT is the duty of people to pray for Magistrates to honour their persons to pay them tribute and other dues to obey their lawfull commands and to be subject to their authority for conscience sake Infidelity or difference in religion doth not make void the magistrates just and legall authority nor free the people from their due obedience to him from which ecclesiasticall persons are not exempted much less hath the Pope any power or jurisdiction over them in their dominions or over any other people and least of all to deprive them of their dominions or lives if he shall judge them to be hereticks or upon any other pretence whatsoever

CHAP. XXIV. OF MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE S

1 S

MARRIAGE is between one man and one woman neither is it lawfull for any man to have more than one wife nor for any woman to have more then one husband at the same time

2 S

MARRIAGE was ordained for the mutuall help of husband and wife for the increase of mankind with a legitimate issue and of the Church with a holy seed and for preventing of uncleanness

3 S

IT is lawfull for all sorts of people to marry who are able with judgement to give their consent yet it is the duty of Christians to marry only in the Lord and therefore such as profess the true reformed religion should not marry with infidels papists or other idolaters neither should such as are godly be unequally yoked by marrying with such as are notoriously wicked in their life or maintain damnable heresies

4 S

MARRIAGE ought not to be within the degrees of consanguinity or affinity forbidden in the Word nor can such incestuous marriages ever be made lawfull by any law of man or consent of parties so as these persons may live together as man and wife The man may not marry any of his wifes kindred nearer in blood than he may of his own nor the woman of the husbands kindred nearer in blood than of her own

5 S

ADULTERY or fornication committed after a contract being detected before marriage giveth just occasion to the innocent party to dissolve that contract In the case of adultery after marriage it is lawfull for the innocent party to sue out a divorce and after the divorce to marry another as if the offending party were dead

6 S

ALTHOUGH the corruption of man be such as is apt to study arguments unduly to put asunder those whom God hath joyned together in marriage yet nothing but adultery or such wilfull desertion as can noways be remedied by the Church or civil magistrate is cause sufficient of dissolving the bond of marriage wherein a publick and orderly course of proceeding is to be observed and the persons concerned in it not left to their own wills and discretion in their own case

CHAP. XXV. OF THE CHURCH S

1 S

THE Catholick or universall Church which is invisible consists of the whole number of the elect that have been are or shall be gathered into one under Christ the head therof and is the spouse the body the fullness of him that filleth all in all

2 S

THE visible Church which is also catholick or universall under the Gospell (not confined to one nation as before under the Law) consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion together with their children and is the kingdom of

the Lord Jesus Christ the house and family of God out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation

3 S

UNTO this Catholick visible Church Christ hath given the ministry oracles and ordinances of God for the gathering and perfecting of the saints in this life to the end of the world and doth by his own presence and Spirit according to his promise make them effectuall thereunto

4 S

THIS Catholick Church hath been sometimes more sometimes less visible and particular Churches which are members thereof are more or less pure according as the doctrine of the Gospell is taught and embraced ordinances administred and publick worship performed more or less purely in them

5 S

THE purest Churches under heaven are subject both to mixture and error and some have so degenerated as to become no Churches of Christ but synagogues of Satan nevertheless there shall be always a Church on earth to worship God according to his will

6 S

THERE is no other head of the Church but the Lord Jesus Christ nor can the Pope of Rome in any sense 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 God

CHAP. XXVI. OF THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS S

1 S

ALL saints that are united to Jesus Christ their head by his spirit and by faith have fellowship with him in his graces sufferings death resurrection and glory and being united to one another in love they have communion in each others gifts and graces and are oblidged to the performance of such duties publick and private as do conduce to their mutuall good both in the inward and outward man

2 S

Saints by profession are bound to maintain an holy fellowship and communion in the worship of God and in performing such other spirituall services as tend to their mutuall edification as also in relieving each other in outward things according to their severall abilities and necessities which communion as God offereth opportunity is to be extended to all those who in every place call upon the name of the Lord Jesus

3 S

THIS Communion which the saints have with Christ doth not make them in any wise partakers of the substance of his Godhead or to be equall with Christ in any respect either of which to affirm is impious and blasphemous Nor doth their communion one with another as saints take away or infringe the title or propriety which each man hath in his goods and possessions

CHAP. XXVII. OF THE SACRAMENTS S

1 S

SACRAMENTS are holy signs and seals of the Covenant of Grace immediatly instituted by God to represent Christ and his benefits and to confirm our interest in him as also to put a visible difference between those that belong unto the church and the rest of the world and solemnly to engage them to the service of God in Christ according to his word

2 S

THERE is in every sacrament a spirituall relation or sacramentall union between the sign and the thing signified whence it comes to pass that the names and effects of the one are attributed to the other

3 S

THE grace which is exhibited in or by the sacraments rightly used is not conferred by any power in them neither doth the efficacy of a sacrament depend upon the piety or intention of him that doth administer it but upon the work of the Spirit and the word of Institution which contains together with a precept authorizing the use thereof a promise of benefit to worthy receivers

4 S

THERE be only two sacraments ordained by Christ our Lord in the Gospell that is to say Baptism and the Supper of the Lord neither of which may be dispensed by any but a minister of the word lawfully ordained

5 S

THE sacraments of the Old Testament in regard of the spirituall things thereby signified and exhibited were for substance the same with those of the New

CHAP. XXVIII. OF BAPTISM S

1 S

BAPTISM is a sacrament of the New Testament ordained by Jesus Christ not only for the solemn admission of the party baptized into the visible church but also to be unto him a sign and seal of the Covenant of Grace of his ingrafting into Christ of

regeneration of remission of sins and of his giving up unto God through Jesus Christ to walk in newness of life which sacrament is by Christs own appointment to be continued in his Church untill the end of the world

2 S

THE outward element to be used in this sacrament is water wherewith the party is to be baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost by a minister of the Gospell lawfully called thereunto

3 S

DIPPING of the person in the water is not necessary but baptism is rightly administred by pouring or sprinkling water upon the person

4 S

NOT only those that do actually profess faith in and obedience unto Christ but also the infants of one or both believing parents are to be baptized

5 S

ALTHOUGH it is a great sin to contemn or neglect this ordinance yet grace and salvation are not so inseparably annexed unto it as that no person can be regenerated or saved without it or that all that are baptized are undoubtedly regenerated

6 S

THE efficacy of baptism is not tied to that moment of time wherein it is administred yet notwithstanding by the right use of this ordinance the grace promised is not only offered but really exhibited and conferred by the Holy Ghost to such (whether of age or infants) as that grace belongeth unto according to the counsell of Gods own will in his appointed time

7 S

THE sacrament of baptism is but once to be administred unto any person

CHAP. XXIX. OF THE LORDS SUPPER S

1 S

OUR Lord Jesus in the night wherein he was betrayed instituted the sacrament of his body and blood called the Lords Supper to be observed in his Church unto the end of the world for the perpetuall remembrance of the sacrifice of himself in his death the sealing all benefits thereof to true believers their spirituall nourishment and growth in him their further engagement in and to all duties which they owe unto him and to be a bond and pledge of their communion with him and with each other as members of his mysticall body

2 S

IN this sacrament Christ is not offered up to his father nor any reall sacrifice made at all for remission of sins of the quick or dead but only a commemoration of that one offering up of himself by himself upon the cross once for all and a spirituall oblation of all possible praise unto God for the same so that the popish sacrifice of the Mass (as they call it) is most abominably injurious to Christs one only sacrifice the alone propitiation for all the sins of the elect

3 S

THE Lord Jesus hath in this ordinance appointed his ministers to declare his word of Institution to the people to pray and bless the elements of bread and wine and thereby to set them apart from a common to an holy use and to take and break the bread to take the cup and (they communicating also themselves) to give both to the communicants but to none who are not then present in the congregation

4 S

PRIVATE masses or receiving this sacrament by a priest or any other alone as likewise the deniall of the cup to the people worshipping the elements the lifting them up or carrying them about for adoration and the reserving them for any pretended religious use are all contrary to the nature of this sacrament and to the institution of Christ

5 S

THE outward elements in this sacrament duely set apart to the uses ordained by Christ have such relation to him crucified as that truly yet sacramentally only they are sometimes called by the name of the things they represent to wit the body and blood of Christ albeit in substance and nature they still remain truly and only bread and wine as they were before

6 S

THAT doctrine which maintaines a change of the substance of bread and wine into the substance of Christs body and blood (commonly called transubstantiation) by consecration of a priest or by any other way is repugnant not to scripture alone but even to common sense and reason overthroweth the nature of the sacrament and hath been and is the cause of manifold superstitions yea of gross idolatries

7 S

WORTHY receivers outwardly partaking of the visible elements of this sacrament do then also inwardly by faith really and indeed yet not carnally and corporally but spiritually receive and feed upon Christ crucified and all benefits of his death the body and blood of Christ being then not corporally or carnally in with or under the bread and wine yet as really but spiritually present to the faith of believers in that ordinance as the elements themselves are to their outward senses

8 S

ALTHOUGH ignorant and wicked men receive the outward elements in this sacrament yet they receive not the thing signified thereby but by their unworthy coming thereunto are guilty of the body and blood of the Lord to their own damnation wherefore all ignorant and ungodly persons as they are unfit to enjoy communion with him so are they unworthy of the Lords table and cannot without great sin against Christ while they remain such partake of these holy mysteries or be admitted thereunto

CHAP. XXX. OF CHURCH CENSURES S

1 S

THE Lord Jesus as King and head of his Church hath therein appointed a government in the hand of church officers distinct from the civil Magistrate

2 S

TO these officers the keys of the kingdom of heaven are committed by virtue whereof they have power respectively to retain and remit sins to shut that kingdom against the impenitent both by the word and censures and to open it unto penitent sinners by the ministry of the gospell and by absolution from censures as occasion shall require

3 S

CHURCH censures are necessary for the reclaiming and gaining of offending brethren for deterring of others from the like offences for the purging out of that leaven which might infect the whole lump for vindicating the honour of Christ and the holy profession of the gospell and for preventing the wrath of God which might justly fall upon the Church if they should suffer his covenant and the sealls thereof to be profaned by notorious and obstinate offenders

4 S

FOR the better attaining of these ends the officers of the church are to proceed by admonition suspension from the sacrament of the Lords supper for a season and by excommunication from the Church according to the nature of the crime and demerit of the person

CHAP. XXXI. OF SYNODS AND COUNCILLS S

1 S

FOR the better government and further edification of the Church there ought to be such assemblies as are commonly called Synods or Councills

2 S

AS Magistrates may lawfully call a synod of ministers and other fit persons to consult and advise with about matters of religion so if Magistrates be open enemies to the

Church the ministers of Christ of themselves by virtue of their office or they with other fit persons upon delegation from their Churches may meet together in such assemblies

3 S

IT belongeth to Synods and Councills ministerially to determine controversies of faith and cases of conscience to set down rules and directions for better ordering of the publick worship of God and government of his Church to receive complaints in cases of maladministration and authoritatively to determine the same which decrees and determinations (if consonant to the word of God) are to be received with reverence and submission not only for their agreement with the word but also for the power whereby they are made as being an ordinance of God appointed thereunto in his word

4 S

ALL Synods or Councills since the Apostles times whether generall or particular may err and many have erred therefore they are not to be made the rule of faith or practise but to be used as an help in both

5 S

SYNODS and councills are to handle or conclude nothing but that which is ecclesiasticall and are not to intermeddle with civil affairs which concern the Commonwealth unless by way of humble petition in cases extraordinary or by way of advice for satisfaction of conscience if they be thereunto required by the civil Magistrate

CHAP. XXXII. OF THE STATE OF MEN AFTER DEATH AND OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD S

1 S

THE bodies of men after death return to dust and see corruption but their souls (which neither die nor sleep) having an immortall subsistence immediatly return to God who gave them the souls of the righteous being then made perfect in holiness are received into the highest heavens where they behold the face of God in light and glory waiting for the full redemption of their bodies and the souls of the wicked are cast into hell where they remain in torments and utter darkness reserved to the judgement of the great day Besides these two places for souls seperated from their bodies the scripture acknowledgeth none

2 S

AT the last day such as are found alive shall not die but be changed and all the dead shall be raised up with the self same bodies and none other although with different qualities which shall be united again to their souls for ever

3 S

THE bodies of the unjust shall by the power of Christ be raised to dishonour the bodies of the just by his spirit unto honour and be made conformable to his own glorious body

CHAP. XXXIII. OF THE LAST JUDGEMENT S

1 S

GOD hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ to whom all power and judgement is given of the Father In which day not only the apostate angels shall be judged but likewise all persons that have lived upon earth shall appear before the tribunall of Christ to give an account of their thoughts words and deeds and to receive according to what they have done in the body whether good or evil

2 S

THE end of Gods appointing this day is for the manifestation of the glory of his mercy in the eternall salvation of the elect and of his justice in the damnation of the reprobate who are wicked and disobedient for then shall the righteous go into everlasting life and receive that fullness of joy and refreshing which shall come from the presence of the Lord but the wicked who know not God and obey not the gospell of Jesus Christ shall be cast into eternall torments and be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power

3 S

AS Christ would have us certainly to be perswaded that there shall be a day of judgement both to deter all men from sin and for the greater consolation of the godly in their adversity so will he have that day unknown to men that they may shake off all carnall security and be always watchfull because they know not at what hour the Lord will come and may be ever prepared to say Come Lord Jesus come quickly Amen

Changes to legislation:
There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Confession of Faith Ratification Act 1690.