

## CONFESSION OF FAITH.

### CHAPTER 20.-Of Christian Liberty, and Liberty of Conscience.

I. The Liberty which Christ hath purchased for Beleevers, under the Gospel, consists, in their freedome from the guilt of sin, the condemning of the Wrath of God, the Curse of the Moral Law<sup>1</sup>; and, in their being delivered from this present evil World, bondage to Satan, and Dominion of sin<sup>2</sup>; from the evil of afflictions, the sting of death, the victory of the grave, and everlasting damnation<sup>3</sup>; as also, in their free accesse to God<sup>4</sup>, and their yeelding obedience unto him, not out of slavish fear, but a Childe-like love and willing minde<sup>5</sup>. All which, were common also to Beleevers under the Law<sup>6</sup>. But, under the New Testament, the liberty of Christians is further enlarged, in their freedom from the yoke of the Ceremonial Law, to which the Jewish Church was subjected<sup>7</sup>; and in greater boldnesse of accesse to the Throne of Grace<sup>8</sup>, and in fuller communications of the free Spirit of God, than Beleevers, under the Law, did ordinarily partake of<sup>9</sup>.

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Question 1.—*Does the liberty which Christ has purchased for believers, under the Gospel, free them from the guilt of sin, condemning wrath of God and curse of the moral law, and dominion of sin?*

*Answer.*—Yes. Tit. 2:14; 1 Thess. 1:10. 1.) By the guilt of sin is meant an obligation to suffer eternal punishment on account of sin. Believers are freed from this by an act of pardoning mercy, which is passed upon the ground of Christ's blood, Eph. 1:7. But sin not only has accompanying guilt, it also exercises a dominion over the sinner. From the reigning power of sin Christ delivers his people in the day of their regeneration; and although sin still dwells in them, its power is gradually weakened in their progressive sanctification, and its very being shall in due time be abolished, Rom. 6:14, 22. 2.) From the condemning wrath of God. To the wrath of God all men are naturally obnoxious. Being children of disobedience, they are also children of wrath, Eph. 2:2, 3. But, upon the ground of the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, believers are completely freed from divine wrath, Rom. 8:1. God may hide his face from them, but his judicial wrath is for ever turned away from them, Isa. 54:9, 10; Rom. 5:10. 3.) From the curse of the law as a broken covenant. Christ, having endured the curse as the Surety of his people, delivers from it all who are found in him, Gal. 3:13; Rom. 6:14; 7:6.

Question 2.—*Does this liberty include their being delivered from this present evil world and bondage to Satan?*

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<sup>1</sup> Tit. 2:14; 1 Thess. 1:10; Gal. 3:13.

<sup>2</sup> Gal. 1:4; Col. 1:13; Acts 26:18; Rom. 6:14.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. 8:28; Ps. 119:71; 1 Cor. 15:54-57; Rom. 8:1.

<sup>4</sup> Rom. 5:1, 2.

<sup>5</sup> Rom. 8:14, 15; 1 John 4:18.

<sup>6</sup> Gal. 3:9, 14.

<sup>7</sup> Gal. 4:1-3, 6, 7; 5:1; Acts 15:10, 11.

<sup>8</sup> Heb. 4:14, 16; 10:19-22.

<sup>9</sup> John 7:38, 39; 2 Cor. 3:13, 17, 18.

*Answer.*—Yes. Acts 26:18. 1.) The world is another tyrannical master, under whose power and influence all men naturally are. But believers are freed from the power of this fascinating and destructive foe, having this freedom purchased by Christ, Gal. 1:4; 6:14. 2.) Additionally, all men are by nature captives of Satan. Christ has freed his people from the “god of this world,” Isa. 61:1; Col. 1:13; 1 Pet. 5:8; Rom. 16:20.

Question 3.—*Does this liberty also release the believer from the evil of afflictions, the sting of death, the victory of the grave and everlasting damnation?*

*Answer.*—Yes. Rom. 8:1. 1.) Christ does not grant the believer an entire exemption from the troubles that are common to men, but he frees them from all the penal evil of afflictions. The cup of their afflictions may be large and deep, but there is not one drop of judicial wrath mingled in it. Their afflictions are designed for their profit; and, through the divine blessing, they are rendered, in various respects, highly beneficial to them, Ps. 119:71; Rom. 8:28; Heb. 12:6-11; 2 Cor. 4:17. 2.) The sting of death—the power to do believers any real harm—has been removed. The effect of the law-curse has been removed from the people of God, 1 Cor. 15:54-57. Instead of doing believers harm, it confers upon believers unspeakable good, Phil. 1:21, 23. 3.) The bodies of believers shall not remain forever under the power of corruption, but shall be raised up glorious and immortal, at the last day, Job 19:26, 27; 1 Cor. 15:20; Hos. 13:14; 1 Cor. 15:54. 4.) Believers are removed from the great and eternal law-curse that leads to the full punishment of damnation, Ps. 9:17; Matt. 25:41. They are secured against coming into condemnation and are delivered from the wrath to come, John 5:24; 1 Thess. 1:10.

Question 4.—*Are believers hereby given free access to God and a freedom of spirit in the service of God?*

*Answer.*—Yes. Rom. 5:1, 2; 8:14, 15. Believers are given a liberty of access to God as a gracious Father, and may pour out their hearts to him, Eph. 3:12. They have a freedom of spirit in the service of God, unlike the wicked men which pay God likes slaves to the tyrant, whom they hate—who serve out of slavish fear of wrath, 2 Cor. 3:17; Luke 1:74, 75; 2 Cor. 5:14; 1 John 4:18.

Question 5.—*Is this purchased freedom enlarged to believers under the New Testament?*

*Answer.*—Yes. Gal. 3:9, 14; 4:1-3, 6, 7; 2 Cor. 3:13, 17, 18. 1.) Christians are now freed from the yoke of the ceremonial law. The Jewish church was burdened with a ceremonial law, Gal. 4:3, but that burdensome yoke is not placed upon the Christian church, Acts 15:10, 11. Upon the full promulgation of the Gospel, and the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem, the observance of them became unlawful, and Paul warns against going back to them, Gal. 5:1. 2.) Christians have greater boldness of access to the throne of grace, Heb. 4:14, 16; 10:19-22; 1 John 3:21; 4:17; 5:14. 3.) Christians enjoy fuller communications of the free Spirit of God than were ordinarily granted to believers under the law. Though the Spirit had, no doubt, been dispensed to the church under the Old Testament, he is more extensively and copiously given under the New, Isa. 44:3; Joel 2:28, 29. Hence the Spirit is said not to have been given before Jesus was glorified, John 7:38, 39. Accordingly, upon the ascension of Christ, and the commencement of the Christian dispensation, the Spirit was conferred in richer abundance, so much that Paul characterizes it as an eminent part of the glory of the New Testament dispensation, that it is “the ministration of the Spirit,” 2 Cor. 3:8.