

CONFESSION OF FAITH.

CHAPTER 24.-Of Marriage, and Divorce.

II. Marriage was ordained for the mutual help of Husband and Wife¹, for the increase of mankind with a legitimate issue, and of the Church with an holy seed²; and, for preventing of uncleanness³.

Question 1.—*Was marriage ordained for the mutual help of husband and wife?*

Answer.—Yes. Gen. 2:18. Thus do the Papists err who despise this institution as an hindrance and require their priests to live in a state of separation. They are confuted for the following reasons: 1.) The apostle Paul enjoins marriage upon the people of God as the normal estate of God's people, 1 Cor. 7:2. He also encourages younger widows to remarry, 1 Tim. 5:14. 2.) God stated explicitly that it was not good for the man to be alone, and for that reason, He created the woman, Gen. 2:18. 3.) Man would be unable to fulfil the command to be fruitful and multiply, if not for the woman, Gen. 1:28. 4.) There is a mutual dependence of men and women in the created order, 1 Cor. 11:12, and this is greatly augmented amongst those entered upon the institution of marriage, Prov. 31:12. 5.) They are a mutual help in their prayers, as exemplified in Scripture, Gen. 25:21; 1 Pet. 3:7. 6.) They are a mutual help in the great matter of salvation, 1 Cor. 7:16; 1 Pet. 3:1; Eph. 5:25.

Question 2.—*Was marriage ordained for the increase of mankind with a legitimate issue, and of the Church with an holy seed?*

Answer.—Yes. Mal. 2:15. God's purpose in making but one woman for the man was because He was seeking a seed for Himself, and, therefore, if there were more than two, it would be an adulterous seed proceeding from thence. Thus do they err, who maintain that bastardy is no stigma or that it is permissible to limit their issue through artificial means. They are confuted for the following reasons: 1.) Jeremiah makes it a chief part of marriage to beget legitimate issue for the increase of the Church, Jer. 29:6. 2.) Paul commands younger widows to this task, 1 Tim. 5:14. 3.) God's gracious interest in the legitimate issue of his children is noted by the apostle, 1 Cor. 7:14. 4.) Bastardy is marked, in the law of God, with peculiar odium, Deut. 23:2; Gen. 21:10; Judg. 11:2. 5.) God gave command to the first married couple to be fruitful and multiply, Gen. 1:28. Which command was reiterated after the Deluge, Gen. 9:1. Now, where any duty is commanded, the contrary sin is forbidden, Matt. 15:4-6. 6.) Isaac implored the blessing of God upon the fecundity of Jacob upon occasion of his finding a wife, Gen. 28:1-4. 7.) The Psalms hold forth the great blessing to the people of God to be found in legitimate issue, Ps. 127:3; 128:3. 8.) Children are mentioned as a part of the virtuous woman's household, Prov. 31:28. 9.) Children are viewed as gracious gifts of God, in the Scripture, Gen. 16:10; 33:5; Prov. 17:6. 10.) Scripture presents childlessness as a partial marriage failure, Gen. 15:3; 25:21; 29:31 and 30:1; Prov. 30:15,16. 11.) The taking away of

¹Gen. 2:18.

²Mal. 2:15.

³1 Cor. 7:2,9.

barrenness was viewed as the removal of a great reproach and defect in the marital estate, Ex. 23:26; 1 Sam. 1:5,6,10,17,18,20; Luke 1:7,13,24,25. 12.) It is considered great matter of praise when God gives many children to his people, Neh. 9:23; Ps. 113:9. 13.) Childbearing is a great work of faith for Christian women, 1 Tim. 2:15. 14.) Paul commends women who have been faithful in this matter to the peculiar attention of the Church in their aged widowhood, 1 Tim. 5:10. 15.) The attempt to avoid this duty of marriage is signally punished by God in the matter of Onan, Gen. 38:9,10.

Question 3.—*Was marriage ordained for preventing of uncleanness?*

Answer.—Yes. 1 Cor. 7:2,9. Thus do they err who regard marriage as an useless institution and no more elevating than fornication. They are confuted for the following reasons: 1.) The apostle clears this matter when he states that the marriage bed is undefiled, Heb. 13:4. 2.) The being joined to harlots is contrasted negatively to that which Scripture speaks of the first marriage, 1 Cor. 6:15,16; Gen. 2:23,24. 3.) Fornication is a sin not so much as to be named among the saints of God, Eph. 5:3, but marriage is given to avoid fornication, 1 Cor. 7:2. 4.) Chastity comports with the estate of marriage, Tit. 2:5. 5.) Solomon enforces the blessing of marital fidelity against the uncleanness of adulterous unions, Prov. 5:18-20.