

ORDINANCE OF COVENANTING.

The National Covenant; or the Confession of Faith.

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

Question 1.—*Is it important for the covenanter to be thoroughly resolved in the truth by the word and Spirit of God that we might believe the true religion and reject the false?*

Answer.—Yes. Rom. 14:5. The word of God, being the sword of the Spirit, Eph. 6:17, and given by the inspiration of God, 2 Tim. 3:16, is that by which the believer might know and discern the good from the evil, Heb. 5:13, 14. It is the duty of the Christian to embrace that which is good and eschew that which is evil, Rom. 12:9. All is to be accomplished that the believer grows in assurance of heart and faith toward God, 1 John 3:19-21.

Question 2.—*Ought the conscience of the covenanter to agree in all points to the Confession and Form of religion of the Church as unto God’s undoubted truth and verity, grounded upon His written word?*

Answer.—Yes. Neh. 9:38. Believers are commanded to hold fast the form of sound words, 2 Tim. 1:13. The adoption of such a confession or form by the Church implies that it is received as the teaching of Scripture, 1 Tim. 3:15. Members of the Church are commanded to walk by the same rule of attainments, Phil. 3:16. This can only be achieved when there is conscientious agreement that such confessions and forms are grounded upon Scripture, Rom. 10:17; 14:23; Isa. 8:20; Hos. 5:11.

Question 3.—*Should the covenanter abhor and detest all contrary religion and doctrine, especially Papistry in its general and particular heads, as they are now damned and confuted by the word of God and the Church?*

Answer.—Yes. Ps. 97:10. Those that fear God are enjoined to practice righteousness and detest that which is evil, 2 Tim. 2:19. A true love to God will show itself in a real hatred of all sin, as that abominable thing which he hates, Amos 5:15.

Question 4.—*May the Roman Antichrist usurp authority over the Scriptures, the Church, the civil magistrate or the consciences of men?*

Answer.—No. 2 Thess. 2:4. The Roman Antichrist may not usurp authority: 1.) Over the Scriptures, because they are the supreme authority and judge in all matters of faith and practice, Matt. 22:29; Eph. 2:20; Acts 28:25. 2.) Over the Church, because it, and not the Roman Antichrist, is the pillar and ground of truth, 1 Tim. 3:15. 3.) Over the civil magistrate, because to him belong the matters and concerns of civil policy, 1 Pet. 2:13, 14.

4.) Over the consciences of men, because these have been set free to serve God in purity and sincerity, James 4:12; Acts 5:29.

Question 5.—*What are some of the doctrines and practices of Romanism which stand condemned by the Reformed Church?*

Answer.—The doctrines and practices of the Roman Church condemned by the Reformed consist in the following: 1.) Their abominable doctrines corrupting the doctrine of salvation, especially that of justification by faith alone, Rom. 4:1-6. 2.) Their abuse of the sacraments and adding to them five bastard sacraments, Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 11:20, 23. 3.) Their laws and dispensations regarding marriage, Matt. 19:9; Lev. 20:19-21. 4.) Their sacrifices and prayers for the dead, 1 Tim. 4:1.

Question 6.—*Ought the covenanter to engage to defend the purity of the doctrine, worship, government and discipline of the Reformed Church, according to his vocation and power, regarding only the great danger of disobedience in the day of God's fearful judgment?*

Answer.—Yes. Matt. 15:9. We are to suffer (if God call us), Phil. 1:29; 2 Tim. 2:12, even death for the true religion, Rev. 2:13; Acts 7:57, 58; Luke 21:15, 16; Phil. 1:20, 21; and the truth; and we are obliged to believe, and give account thereof before all men, and a reason of our faith and hope, 1 Pet. 3:15.

Question 7.—*Should the covenanter call God to witness that his subscribing the true Reformed religion did not flow from any worldly respect, but from a sincere love of God's true religion?*

Answer.—Yes. 2 Cor. 1:23. Since God alone is able to read the heart, Jer. 17:9, 10; it is appropriate that He be called upon to witness in matters of such great consequence, Judg. 11:10; 1 Sam. 12:5. God is the only one who can discern the true motives and determine if there is an inward heart disposition to idolatry, Ps. 7:9; 44:20, 21.

Question 8.—*Does a great part of the quietness and stability of the true religion and Church depend upon the safety and good behavior of the magistrate?*

Answer.—Yes. 1 Tim. 2:2. It is the duty of the civil magistrate to take order that the peace and unity of the church be preserved, to see that God's truth be kept pure and entire in matters of doctrine and worship, and to suppress heresies and blasphemies, Isa. 49:23; Ezra 7:23, 25-28; Lev. 24:16; 2 Kings 18:4; 2 Chron. 15:12, 13; 34:33.