

## CONFESSION OF FAITH.

### CHAPTER 18.-*Of the Assurance of Grace and Salvation.*

I. Although hypocrites and other unregenerate men may vainly deceive themselves with false hopes, and carnall presumptions of being in the favour of God, and estate of salvation<sup>1</sup>; which hope of theirs shall perish<sup>2</sup>: yet, such as truly beleeeve 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<sup>3</sup>, and may rejoyce in the hope of the glory of God, which hope shall never make them ashamed<sup>4</sup>.

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Question 1.—*May hypocrites and other unregenerate men vainly deceive themselves with false hopes, and carnal presumptions of being in the favour of God, and estate of salvation?*

*Answer.*—Yes. Deut. 29:19, 20; John 8:41. That unregenerate men, beguiled by the natural desire for happiness, flattered by self-love, and betrayed by a spirit of self-righteousness and self-confidence, should frequently indulge an unfounded assurance of their own gracious condition, is rendered antecedently probable from what we know of human nature, and rendered certain as a fact from common observation and from the declarations of Scripture, Micah 3:11; Job 8:13, 14.

Question 2.—*Shall the hypocrites' hope perish?*

*Answer.*—Yes. Matt. 7:22, 23. At the Judgment, when all things are laid bare, the hypocrites' hope shall perish. The hypocrites' hope is of short duration, being only for this time upon earth, Job 20:5. The day of his death is the end of his hope, Job 13:16; 27:8.

Question 3.—*May they who truly believe in the Lord Jesus, and love him in sincerity, and endeavour to walk in all good conscience before him; may they be certainly assured in this life, that they are in a state of grace, and being enabled by the Spirit to know the things which are freely given them of God, may they without extraordinary revelation attain thereto?*

*Answer.*—Yes. 1 John 2:3; 3:14, 18, 19, 21, 24; Eph. 3:17, 18. Thus, Papists err maintaining that no man can be sure (that is, sure by divine faith) of God's peculiar favour towards himself, without extraordinary revelation. Also, the Arminians are in error when they assert that no man can have certain assurance of final salvation in this life. They are confuted for the following reasons: 1.) Because the apostle commands us, saying, give all diligence to make your calling and election sure, for if you do these things, ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, 2 Pet. 1:10, 11; Heb. 6:11, 12. 2.) Because the apostle commands the Corinthians to examine themselves, whether they be in the faith, 2 Cor. 13:5. 3.) Because the Scripture proposes and sets forth sure marks and tokens, by which a believer may be infallibly assured that he is one of the number of

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<sup>1</sup> Job 8:13, 14; Micah 3:11; Deut. 29:19; John 8:41.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 7:22, 23.

<sup>3</sup> 1 John 2:3; 3:14, 18, 19, 21, 24; 5:13.

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

Christ's sheep, John 10:4, 5, 27, 28. And that he is one of Christ's disciples, John 13:3, 5. In fact, it is the scope of the whole first epistle of John to propose such sure marks to believers, whereby they may know that they have life eternal, 1 John 5:13. 4.) Because the true believer may be persuaded that neither death nor life, nor any other thing, can separate him from the love of Christ, Rom. 8:38, 39. Where the apostle speaks not only of himself, but of them to whom he writes. 5.) Because believers have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby they cry Abba Father, and he himself witnesses with their spirit, that they are the children of God, Rom. 8:15, 16. 6.) Because believers have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that they might know the things freely given to them of God, 1 Cor. 2:12.

Question 4.—*May those who truly believe rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, which hope shall never make them ashamed?*

*Answer.*—Yes. Rom. 5:2, 5. The Scriptures given numerous examples of the saints rejoicing and taking comfort in the knowledge of their assurance of salvation, Ps. 17:15; Ps. 23:6; Job 19:25; Rom. 8:37-39.