

CONFESSION OF FAITH.

CHAPTER 19.-*Of the Law of God.*

VII. Neither are the forementioned Uses of the Law contrary to the grace of the Gospel, but doe sweetly comply with it¹; the Spirit of Christ subduing, and inabling the will of man, to do that, freely and chearfully, which the will of God, revealed in the Law, requireth to be done².

Question 1.—*Are the forementioned uses of the law contrary to the grace of the Gospel?*

Answer.—No. Gal. 3:21. Scripture makes clear that the uses of the law—as a rule of life, discovering their sinfulness, giving a clearer sight of the Saviour, *etc.*—are in sweet compliance with the grace of the Gospel, 1 Cor. 9:21, Rom. 7:22. It may be argued that the law promises us salvation, upon condition that we deserve it: and the promise of the Gospel tells us that we shall be taken into God's favour without any deserving—and these must needs be contrary, John 1:17. Indeed, the promises of the law have no beneficent effect upon us as long as they have reference to the merits of works, and consequently, if considered in themselves, they are in a sense abolished, Rom. 6:14. Thus, that renowned promise, that God has given good precepts, Ezek. 20:11, and he who does them, shall live in them, Lev. 18:5. The apostle teaches that this promise is of no importance, Rom. 10:5; Gal. 3:12; if we stop there, it will benefit not a whit more than if it had never been given. However, so far from loosing the obligation of obedience, Paul makes clear that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in them that are the children of grace, Rom. 8:4. The grace of saving faith does not nullify or void the law to believers, but establishes it for them, Rom. 3:31. The very power needed for the keeping of the law is only poured out upon those who are effectually called by God's Spirit, Rom. 7:5, 6.

The Gospel, by definition, is good news. In contrast, the law is God's demand upon us, Matt. 5:17-20. God demands that we cheerfully obey him, 2 Cor. 9:7; that we spontaneously love the brethren, Gal. 5:14; 1 John 4:7, 8; that we patiently endure trials 2 Tim. 2:12. Just as the words of the Bible are bound up into a single authoritative and holy scripture, so, too, are the words of law and Gospel bound up into a single divine Word that does what God wants it to do, Isa. 55:11, 12. Though they are different things, and it is through the preaching of the difference between them that faith will come, Rom. 10:14-17; yet, they are not contrary things, especially when believers use the law lawfully, 1 Tim. 1:8.

Question 2.—*Does the Spirit of Christ subdue and enable the will of man, to do that, freely and cheerfully, which the will of God, revealed in the Law, requires to be done?*

Answer.—Yes. Ezek. 36:27. The sinner both as a subdued captive of sin is led under sin, is without strength and is entirely destitute of strength for good; and as an enemy of God and impious, he feels the deepest enmity towards God and is accustomed to war against him, Rom. 7:23,—not only averse from God by impotence, but also averse by malignity. Nonetheless, when he is turned by the Spirit of Christ, he is made willing in the

¹ Gal. 3:21.

² Ezek. 36:27; Heb. 8:10 *with* Jer. 31:33.

day of his power, Ps. 110:3. This turning enables the will of man, to do that, freely and cheerfully, which the will of God, revealed in the Law, requires to be done, Heb. 8:10 *with* Jer. 31:33. Thus, is the day of his power, when the Lord enlarges the hearts of his people, they are made glad to walk in his ways, Ps. 119:32. Scripture frequently joins together the relations both of the sweetness and efficacy in the same passages, as when the spouse joins “running” with “drawing,” Song 1:4; Christ joins the “yoke” and the “burden” with “easiness” and “lightness,” Matt. 11:30; we are said to be drawn, but also at the same time to be taught, John 6:44, 45; to be persuaded by the power of the Spirit, but also by the demonstration, 1 Cor. 2:4; to be converted by the exceeding great power of God, but with an illumination full of joy, Eph. 1:18, 19; to be bound, but also to be enticed, Jer. 20:7; to be constrained, but with the cords of a man and with bands of love, Hos. 11:4; 2 Cor. 5:14. Hence the same Gospel by which we are converted, is called both the “power” and “wisdom,” 1 Cor. 1:18, 19, 24; or “the arm of God,” than which nothing is stronger; and “honey” or “milk,” than which nothing is more pleasant, Ps. 19:10; 1 Pet. 2:2. This effectual working of the Spirit of Christ in the hearts of believers works that inclination of will whereby those regenerated are moved to desire that which is good and holy, Rom. 7:22, 25.