

CONFESSION OF FAITH.

CHAPTER 21.-*Of Religious Worship, and the Sabbath Day.*

I. The light of Nature sheweth that there is a God, who hath Lordship and Sovereignty over all, is good, and doth good unto all, and is therefore to be feared, loved, praised, called upon, trusted in, and served, with all the heart, and with all the soule, and with all the might¹. But, the acceptable way of Worshipping the true God, is instituted by himselfe, and so limited by his own revealed Will, that he may not be Worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representation, or any other way not prescribed in the holy Scripture².

Question 1.—*Does the light of nature show that there is a God, who has lordship and sovereignty over all?*

Answer.—Yes. Acts 17:24; Ps. 119:68; Jer. 10:7; Ps. 31:23. Therefore, the Socinians err maintaining that there is no knowledge of God implanted naturally in the minds of men. Also, those err, who, under pretext of maintaining a Godhead, have, in effect, taught men to deny there is a God. Again, those err, who dispute against the being of a Godhead, because they cannot find a demonstration for it. They are confuted for the following reasons: 1.) Because the apostle teaches us that the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen—even his eternal power and Godhead—leaving them without excuse who deny him, Rom. 1:20. 2.) The Psalmist says the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows his handy-work. Which is to say, they give us matter and occasion to speak and discourse of his omnipotency, wisdom, and goodness, Ps. 19:1-3. 3.) Because the knowledge of the law of nature, is naturally implanted in the minds of all men, Rom. 2:14. Therefore some knowledge of the lawgiver must be implanted in the minds of all men. 4.) Because in the most wicked and ungodly, there are terrors and tortures of conscience, wherewith do what they will, they are haunted and possessed; from which it is evident, that in the minds of all men, there is some lively knowledge of God. 5.) Because men would rather worship a stock or a stone, than they should think there were no God, Acts 17:23. 6.) Because the existence of a Godhead may be evinced from the foretelling things to come, Isa. 41:23. 7.) From the assaults and suggestions of Satan, we find there is a devil. May we not then conclude there is a God? The devil labours by all means to extinguish the light of the gospel, to lead men on in ignorance, error and prophaneness, and to turn them out of the path of holiness. Now, why should Satan thus war against God, his word, and his saints? why should he seek God's dishonour, and man's destruction, if there were not a God, a law, and an everlasting life? 8.) From the being of man, the curious workmanship of his body in the womb, which is wrought most artfully, Ps. 139:15; Job 10:10. But especially from the being of man's soul, which is immaterial, rational, and immortal.

¹Rom. 1:20; Acts 17:24; Ps. 119:68; Jer. 10:7; Ps. 31:23; 18:3; Rom. 10:12; Ps. 62:8; Josh. 24:14; Mark 12:33.

²Deut. 12:32; Matt. 15:9; Acts 17:25; Matt. 4:9,10; Deut. 4:15-20; Ex. 20:4-6; Col. 2:23.

Question 2.—*Is the acceptable way of worshipping the true God, instituted by himself, and so limited to his own revealed will, that he may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of man, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representations, or any other way not prescribed in the holy Scripture?*

Answer.—Yes. Deut. 12:32; Matt. 15:9; Acts 17:25; Matt. 4:9,10; Deut. 4:15-20; Ex. 20:4-6; Col. 2:23. Thus the Papists err, who teach, that the images of Christ and the Trinity ought to be worshipped, and that not improperly, but even properly, and *per se*, with the same sort of worship, wherewith Christ and the blessed Trinity are adorned. Likewise, the Greeks err, maintaining that the painted images of God may be adored, but not the engraved or carved images of God. They are confuted for the following reasons: 1.) Because it is expressly against the second commandment, Ex. 20:4,5. 2.) Because God is infinite, unmeasurable, incomprehensible, and spiritual; and therefore nothing can represent him, as the prophet well infers, Isa. 40:18,25. 3.) Because every representation of God, by graven images or pictures, is a most disgraceful changing of the glory of the incorruptible God, Rom. 1:23. 4.) Because images and pictures of this kind are lies and vanities, which the Lord abhors and mocks at, with an holy scorn, Isa. 44:9-18. 5.) Because the Lord expressly forbids the Israelites to represent him under any form or shape, for, the text says, ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake to you in Horeb, out of the midst of the fire, Deut. 4:15-20. 6.) Because though the Israelites worshipped the true God by an image (for Aaron built an altar, and made proclamation, and said to morrow is a feast to the Lord) yet they are accused of the sin of idolatry, and for that cause severely punished, Ex. 32:21,27,35. 7.) Because Jeroboam, and the ten tribes who worshipped the true God, by the golden calves, set up at Dan and Bethel, (for the worship of false gods by images, was afterwards brought in by Ahab, who is thereby said to have provoked the Lord more than all the kings of Israel before him, 1 Kings 16:31,32.) are accused of the sin of idolatry, and severely threatened, 1 Kings 12:29,30, and 1 Kings 13:2, which threatening was put in execution by Josiah, 2 Kings 23:15,16,20. 8.) Because the apostle says, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device, Acts 17:29.