

CONFESSION OF FAITH.

CHAPTER 27.-Of the Sacraments.

IV. There be only two Sacraments ordained by Christ our Lord, in the Gospel; that is to say, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord: neither of which may be dispensed by any, but by a Minister of the Word lawfully Ordained¹.

Question 1.—*Are there only two sacraments ordained by Christ in the Gospel?*

Answer.—Yes. These two being, namely, baptism and the Lord's supper, Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 11:20, 23. Thus do the Romanists err, making seven sacraments, by adding to baptism and the Lord's supper, confirmation, penance, extreme unction, ordination, and matrimony. They are confuted for the following reasons: 1.) Because no other sacraments, save baptism and the Lord's supper, are instituted by Christ in all the holy Scripture. 2.) Because the description and definition of a sacrament does agree only to baptism and the Lord's supper. Penance, Confirmation, and Extreme Unction are not divine institutions in any sense. Marriage was instituted, not by Christ, but by the Father; and Orders were instituted by Christ: but neither of these ordinances (a.) consists of an outward, visible sign, signifying an inward, spiritual grace; nor (b.) does either of them "represent, seal, or confer Christ and the benefits of the new covenant." 3.) Because Christ was a co-partner, and the sharer of baptism and the Lord's supper, which in his own person, he did sanctify, and by them did testify and profess his communion with his people of the New Testament, but never was a sharer of any of these five bastard sacraments.

Question 2.—*May baptism and the Lord's supper be dispensed by any but a minister of the Word, lawfully ordained?*

Answer.—No. Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 11:20, 23; 4:1; Heb. 5:4. Thus do the Anabaptists err maintaining that the sacraments may be dispensed and administered by any believer. Likewise, the Papists and Lutherans err maintaining that it is lawful for the non-ordained, or women, to administer the sacrament of baptism, in case of necessity. They are confuted for the following reasons: 1.) Because Christ gave power of dispensing the sacraments to them only, to whom he gave the power of preaching, Matt. 28:19; but the power of preaching is not given to all men, Heb. 5:4. 2.) Because all that ever did dispense the sacrament of baptism in the New Testament, were either called ordinarily, or extraordinarily; as is evident from the examples of John the Baptist and disciples of Christ. From the example of Peter, Acts 2:41. From the example of Philip, Acts 8:38. From the example of Ananias, Acts 9:18. From the example of Paul and Silas, Acts 16:15, 33. 3.) Because it is unlawful for any man to affix the king's seal to a charter, or letter, unless he is a person authorized, and deputed by the king for that use. But the sacraments are seals of the covenant of God and his people, Rom. 4:11. 4.) Because women are not permitted to speak publicly in the church; therefore they have no power to dispense the sacrament of baptism, 1 Cor. 14:34; 1 Tim. 2:12. 5.) Because the adversaries grant that it is unlawful to women or the non-ordained, to administer the Lord's supper, therefore it is

¹ Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 11:20, 23; 4:1; Heb. 5:4.

as unlawful for them to administer baptism. No just cause or reason of disparity can be given. 6.) Because the benefit of regeneration is not tied, as the adversaries may dream, to the outward baptism, as is clear and evident from the conversion of the thief on the cross, and from 1 Pet. 3:21. Therefore, there is no such necessity of baptism, as the Papists and Lutherans do fancy.

This is not said in the interest of any priestly theory of the ministry, as if there were any grace or grace-conferring virtue transmitted by ordination in succession from the apostles to the person ordained. But since the Church is an organized society, under laws executed by regularly appointed officers, it is evident that ordinances—which are badges of Church membership, the gates of the fold, the instruments of discipline, and seals of the covenant formed by the great Head of the Church with his living members—can properly be administered only by the highest legal officers of the Church, those who are commissioned as ambassadors for Christ to treat in his name with men, 1 Cor. 4:1; 2 Cor. 5:20.