

## CONFESSTION OF FAITH.

### CHAPTER 15.-*Of Repentance unto Life.*

III. Although Repentance be not to be rested in, as any satisfaction for sin, or any cause of the pardon thereof<sup>1</sup>, which is the act of Gods free grace in Christ<sup>2</sup>; yet is it of such necessity to all sinners, that none may expect pardon without it<sup>3</sup>.

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Question 1.—*Is repentance to be rested on, as any satisfaction for sin, or cause of the pardon thereof?*

Answer.—No. Ezek. 16:61-3. Thus do the Papists err maintaining that repentance is a satisfaction for sins (though an imperfect satisfaction) and that it deserves the mercy of God, and pardon of sin. They are confuted for the following reasons:

1.) Because Christ did satisfy the justice of God to the full: And it is blood only that purges us from all sin, Isa. 53:4-6,8,11; 1 John 1:7. 2.) Because to satisfy for sin, is a part of the priestly office of Christ, which cannot be communicated to any, Heb. 2:17 compared with Heb. 7:23,24. 3.) Because the Lord pardoneth our sins, not for our sake, but for his own sake, Isa. 43:25; Ezek. 36:25,31,32. 4.) Because pardon of sin is an act of the free favour of God, Hos. 14:2; Eph. 1:7. But if it be of the free favour of God, then it is no more of works and repentance, as a satisfaction for sin, Rom. 11:6.

Nor are those, like the Socinians, correct who deny the atonement of Christ for sin, and maintain that repentance is the only atonement required, for only through his shed blood are we cleansed from sin, 1 John 1:7.

Question 2.—*Is the pardon of sin an act of God's free grace?*

Answer.—Yes. Hos. 14:2,4; Rom. 3:24. Forgiveness, or the actual condonation of sinners, the pardon and forgiveness of sins, is free; but yet so as it is everywhere restrained unto a respect unto Christ, unto his death and blood shedding. Eph. 1:7: "We have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins." Eph. 4:32: "God for Christ's sake has forgiven you." Rom. 3:25,26: "God has set him forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins." It is absolutely free in respect of all immediate transactions between God and sinners, Isa. 55:1.

Question 3.—*Is repentance of such necessity that a sinner may not expect pardon without it?*

Answer.—Yes. Luke 13:3,5; Acts 17:30,31. Repentance is of such necessity to all sinners that none may expect pardon without it. This is evident—1.) Because the giving of pardon to a non-repentant sinner would be in effect to sanction his sin, to confirm him in his sinful state, and to encourage others therein, Acts 3:19. Although Scripture and the moral sense of men teach that repentance is no adequate satisfaction for sin, nor an equivalent for the penalty, they just as clearly teach that it would be inconsistent in every sense with good morals to pardon a person cherishing an unrepentant spirit, Acts 26:19, 20. 2.) Repentance is the natural and instant sequence of the grace of regeneration, Luke

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<sup>1</sup>Ezek. 36:31,32; 16:61-3.

<sup>2</sup>Hos. 14:2,4; Rom. 3:24; Eph. 1:7.

<sup>3</sup>Luke 13:3,5; Acts 17:30,31.

3:8, 9. It also embraces an element of faith in Christ; and that faith is, as we have seen, the instrument of justification, Isa. 30:15. He that repents believes, Jer. 31:19. He that does not repent does not believe, Rom. 2:5. He that does not believe is not justified, Luke 13:3. Regeneration and justification are never separated, Ps. 16:11; 119:104, 105. 3.) The design of Christ's work is to "save his people *from* their sins." Matt. 1:21. He frees them from the guilt of their sins by pardon, and he brings them clear from the power of their sins through repentance. "Him hath God exalted . . . to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins." Acts 5:31. 4.) Repentance, like faith, is a duty as well as a grace, and ministers are commanded to preach it as essential to forgiveness, Luke 24:47; Acts 20:21.