

The Confession of Faith of the Kirk of Scotland; with the Bond or Covenant subscribed unto by the whole Kingdome:

The Confession of Faith, subscribed at first by the Kings Majesty, and his household, in the year of God 1580. Thereafter, by persons of all ranks, in the year 1581, by ordinance of the Lords of the Secret Councell, and Acts of the generall Assembly. Subscribed againe by all sorts of persons, in the year 1590, by a new ordinance of Councell, at the desire of the generall Assembly: with a generall Bond for maintainance of the true religion, and the Kings person: And now subscribed in the year 1638 by us, Noblemen, Barons, Gentlemen, Burgeses, Ministers, and Commons under subscribing, together with our resolution and promises for the causes after specified, to maintaine the said true religion, and the Kings Majesty, according to the Confession aforesaid, and Acts of Parliament: the tenor whereof here followeth.

We all, and every one of us underwritten, protest that after long and due examination of our own consciences in matters of true, and false religion, are now thoroughly resolved of the truth by the word & Spirit of God; & therefore we beleive with our hearts, confesse with our mouths, subscribe with our hands, and constantly affirme before God, and the whole world: that this only is the true Christian Faith, and Religion; pleasing God, and bringing salvation to man, which now is by the mercy of God revealed to the world, by the preaching of the blessed Evangel: And received, beleived, and defended by many and sundry notable Kirks and Realmes; but chiefly by the Kirk of Scotland, the Kings Majesty, and our Estates of this Realme, as Gods eternall truth, and only ground of our salvation; as more particularly is expressed in the Confession of our faith, established and confirmed by many Acts of Parliament, and now of a long time hath been openly professed by the Kings Majesty, and whole body of this Realm, both in Burgh and Land. To the which Confession and forme of religion we willingly agree in our consciences, in all points as unto Gods undoubted truth and verity, grounded only upon his written word: and therefore we abhorre and detest all contrary religion and doctrine: but chiefly all kinde of Papistry, in generall and particular heads, even as they are now damned and confuted by the word of God, and Kirk of Scotland: but in especiall, we detest and refuse the usurped authority of that Romane Antichrist, upon the Scriptures of God, upon the Kirk, the civill Magistrate, and consciences of men, all his tyrannous lawes made upon indifferent things, against our Christian liberty; his erroneous doctrine against the sufficiency of the written word, and the perfection of the Law, the office of Christ & his blessed Evangel. His corrupted doctrine concerning originall sinne, our naturall inability and rebellion to Gods law, our justification by faith only, our imperfect sanctification and obedience to the Law, the nature, number, and use of the holy Sacraments. His five bastard Sacraments, with all his rites, ceremonies, and false doctrine added to the ministration of the true Sacraments, without the word of God. His cruell judgement against Infants departing without the Sacrament, his absolute necessity of Baptisme, his blasphemous opinion of Transubstantiation, or reall presence of Christs body in the elements, and receiving of the same by the wicked, or bodies of men; his dispensations with solemne Oathes, perjuries, and degrees of marriage forbidden in the word, his cruelty against the innocent divorced, his devellish Masse, his blasphemous priesthood, his prophane Sacrifices for the finnes of the dead & the quick, his Canonization of men calling upon Angels or Saints departed worshipping of imagerie reliqs, and crosses, dedicating of kirkes, Altars, dayes, vowes to creatures, his purgatory, prayers for the dead, praying, or speaking in a strange language, with his processions, and blasphemous lettany, and multitude of advocates, or mediators, his manifold orders, auricular confession, his desperate and uncertaine repentance, his generall, and doubtfull faith, his satisfaction of men for their finnes, his justifications by works, *opus operatum*, workes of supererogation, merits, pardons, peregrinations and stations, his holy water baptizing of bells, conjuring of spirits, crossing, anointing, conjuring, hallowing of Gods good creatures, with the superstitious opinion, joyned there with his wordly Monarchy, and wicked Hierarchy, his three solemne vowes, with all his shavelings of sundry sorts, his erroneous and bloody decrees made at Trent, with all the subscribers, and approvers of that cruell and bloody band conjured against the Kirk of God: and finally we detest all his vaine allegories, rites, signes, and traditions, brought in the Kirk, without or against the word of God, and doctrine of this true reformed Kirk; to the which we joyne our selves willingly in doctrine, faith, religion, discipline and use of the Holy Sacraments, as lively members of the same in Christ our Head, promising and swearing by the great name of God our Lord, That we shall continue in the obedience of the doctrine and discipline of this Kirk, and shall defend the same according to our vocation, and power, all the dayes of our lives, under the paines contained in the law, and danger both of body and soule in the day of Gods fearefull Iudgements: And seeing that many are stirred up by Satan, and that Roman Antichrist, to promise, sweare, subscribe and for a time use the holy Sacraments in the Kirk, deceitfully against their owne consciences, minding thereby, first under the Externall cloak of religion, to corrupt and subvert secretly Gods true religion, within the Kirk; and afterward when time may serve to become open enemies and persecutors of the same, under vain hope of the Popes dispensation, devised against the word of God to his greater confusion, and their double condemnation in the day of the Lord Iesus Christ.

We therefore willing to take away all suspicion of hypocrisie, and of such double dealing with God and his Kirk, protest, and call the searcher of all hearts for witnesse, that our mindes and hearts do fully agree with this our Confession, Promise, Oath, and Subscription; so that we are not moved for any worldly respect; but are perswaded only in our consciences through the knowledge and love of Gods true Religion printed in our hearts by the holy Spirit, as we shall answer to him, in the day when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed: and because we perceive that the quietnesse and stability of our Religion and Kirk, doth depend upon the safety and good behaviour of the Kings Majesty, as upon a comfortable instrument of Gods mercy granted to this Countrey, for the maintaining of his Kirk, and ministration of justice amongst us; we protest and promise with our hearts under the same oath, handwrit, and paines, that we shall defend his royall person and authority, with our goods, bodies, and lives, in the defence of Christ his Evangel, Liberties of our Countrey, ministration of justice, and punishment of iniquity, against all enemies within this Realme or without, as we desire our God to be a strong and mercifull defender to us in the day of our death, and comming of our Lord Iesus Christ, to whom with the Father and the holy Spirit be all honour and glory eternally.

Nobedience to the Commandement of God, conforme to the praetice of the godly in former times, and according to the laudable example of our worthy and religious Progenitors, and of many yet living amongst us, which was warranted also by Act of Councell, commanding a generall Bond to be made and subscribed, by his Majesties Subjects of all ranks, for two causes; one was for defending the true religion as it was then reformed, and is expressed in the confession of faith above written, and a former large Confession established by sundry Acts of lawfull generall Assemblies, and of Parliaments, unto which it hath relation, set downe in publick Chatechismes, and which had been for many years, with a blessing from heaven, preached and professed in this Kirk and Kingdome, as Gods undoubted truth, grounded only upon this written word: the other cause was, for maintaining the Kings Majesties person and Estate; the true worship of God, and the Kings authority being so straightly joyned, as that they had the same friends and common enemies, and did stand, and fall together: and finally being convinced in our mindes, and confessing with our mouthes, that the present and succeeding generations in this land, are bound to keep the aforesaid nationall Oath and subscription inviolable. Wee Noblemen, Barons, Gentlemen, Burgeses, Ministers, and Commons under subscribing, considering divers times before, and especially at this time the danger of the true reformed religion, of the Kings honour, and of the publick peace of the Kingdome by the manifold innovations and evils generally contained and particularly mentioned in our late supplications, complaints, and protestations, doe hereby professe, and before God, his Angels, and the world, solemnly declare, that with our whole hearts we agree and resolve, all the dayes of our life constantly to adhere unto, and to defend the aforesaid true religion, and forbearing the praetice of all novations, already introduced in the matters of the worship of God, or approbation of the corruptions of the publick government of the Kirk, or civill places and power of Kirk-men, till they be tryed and allowed in free Assemblies, and in Parliaments, to labour by all meanes lawfull to recover the purity and liberty of the Gospel, as it was established and professed before the aforesaid novations: and because after due examination we plainly perceive, and undoubtedly beleive that the innovations and evils contained in our supplications, complaints, and protestations have no warrant of the word of God, are contrary to the Articles of the aforesaid Confessions, to the intention and meaning of the blessed reformers of religion in this land, to the above written Acts of Parliament, and doe sensibly tend to the re-establishing of the Popish religion and tyranny, and to the subversion and ruine of the true reformed religion, and of our liberties, lawes, and estates. We also declare that the aforesaid Confessions are to be interpreted, and ought to be understood of the aforesaid novations and evils, no lesse than if every one of them had beene expressed in the aforesaid Confessions, and that we are obliged to detest and abhorre them, amongst other particular heads of Papistry abjured therein; and therefore from the knowledge and conscience of our duty to God, to our King and Countrey, without any worldly respect or inducement, so farre as humane infirmity will suffer, wishing a further measure of the grace of God for this effect; We promise & sweare by the great name of the Lord our God, to continue in the profession and obedience of the aforesaid religion: that we shall defend the same, & resist all these contrary errors and corruptions, according to our vocation, and to the uttermost of that power that God hath put in our hands, all the dayes of our life: and in like manner with the same heart we declare before God and men, that we have no intention nor desire to attempt any thing, that may turne to the dishonour of God, or to the diminution of the Kings greatnesse and authority: but on the contrary, we promise and sweare that we shall to the uttermost of our power, with our meanes and lives, stand to the defence of our dread Sovereigne, the Kings Majesties person and authority, in the defence and preservation of the aforesaid true religion, liberties and lawes of the kingdome: as also to the mutuall defence and assistance every one of us of another, in the same cause of maintaining the true religion, and his Majesties authority with our best counsell, our bodies, meanes, and whole power against all sorts of persons whatsoever; so that whatsoever shall be done to the least of us for that cause shall be taken as done to us all in generall, and to every one of us in particular: and that wee shall neither directly nor indirectly suffer our selves to be divided or with-drawne, by whatsoever suggestion or allurements, or terror from this blessed and loyall conjunction, nor shall cast ever suggestion or allurements, that may stay or hinder any such resolution, as by common consent shall be found to conduce for so good ends: but on the contrary, shall by all lawfull meanes labour to further and promote the same; and if any such dangerous and divisive motion bee made to us by word, or writ, we and every one of us shall either suppress it, or if need be, shall incontinent make the same knowne, that it may be timely obviated: neither doe we feare the foule aspersions of rebellion, combination, or what else our adversaries from their craft and malice would put upon us, seeing what we doe is so well warranted, and ariseth from an unfeigned desire to maintaine the true worship of God, the Majesty of our King, and peace of the Kingdome, for the common happinesse of our selves, and the posterity. And because we cannot look for a blessing from God upon our proceedings, except with our profession and subscription we joyne such a life and conversation, as becometh Christians, who have renewed their Covenant with God; we therefore faithfully promise for our selves, our followers, and all others under us, both in publick in our particular families, and personall carriage to endeavour to keep our selves within the bounds of Christian liberties, and to be good examples to others of all godlinesse, sobernesse and righteounesse, and of every duty we owe to God and man. And that this our union and conjunction may be observed without violation, we call the living God the searcher of our hearts to witnesse, who knoweth this to be our sincere desire and unfeigned resolution, as we shall answer to Iesus Christ in the great day, and under the paine of Gods everlasting wrath, and of infamy and losse of all honour and respect in this world, most humbly beseeching the Lord to strengthen us by his holy Spirit for this end, and to blesse our desires and proceedings with a happy successe, that religion and righteounesse may flourish in the land, to the glory of God, and honour of the King, and the peace and comfort of us all, in witnesse whereof we have subscribed with our hands all the premises, &c.