669 f. 25/65

A Brief Confession or Declaration of FAITH.

(Lately Presented to KING CHARLES the Second:)

Set forth by many of us, who are (falsely) called *Ana-Baptists*, to inform all men (in these days of scandal and reproach) of our innocent Beleef and Practise; for which wee are not only resolved to Suffer Persecution, to the losse of our Goods, but also Life it Self, rather than to decline the same.

Subscribed by certain Elders, Deacons, and Brethren, met at *London*, in the behalf of themselves, and many others unto whom they belong; in *London*, and in severall Counties of this Nation, who are of the same Faith with us.

I. WEE Beleeve and are very confident, that there is but one God the Father, of whom are all things, from everlasting to everlasting, glorious, and unwordable in all his Attributes, 1 *Cor.* 8. 6. *Isa.* 40. 28.

II. That God in the beginning made man *upright*, and put him into a state and condition of Glory, without the least mixture of misery, from which hee by *transgression* fell, and so came into a miserable and mortall estate, subject unto the first death, *Gen.* 1. 31. *Eccles.* 7. 29. *Gen.* 2. 17. 3. 17, 18, 19.

III. That there is one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, who is the only begotten Son of God, born of the Virgin *Mary*; yet as truly *Davids* Lord, and *Davids* root, as *Davids* Son, and *Davids* Off-spring, *Luk.* 20. 44. *Rev.* 22. 16. whom God freely *sent into the World* (because of his great love unto the World) who as freely *gave himself a ransome for all*, 1 *Tim.* 2. 5 6. *tasting death for every man*, Heb. 2. 9. *a propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole World*, 1 John. 2. 2.

IV. That *God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*, 2 Pet. 3. 9. *and the knowledge of the truth, that they might be saved*, 1 Tim. 2. 4. For which end Christ hath commanded, that the Gospel (to wit, the glad tydings of remission of sins) should be preached to every creature, *Mark.* 16. 15. So that no man shall eternally suffer in Hell (that is, the second death) for want of a Christ that dyed for them, but as the Scripture saith, for *denying the Lord that bought them*, 2 *Pet.* 2. 1. or because they *believe not in the name of the only begotten Son of God*, *John.* 3. 18. Unbelief therefore being the cause why the just and righteous God, will condemn the children of men; it follows against all contradiction, that all men at one time or other, are put into such a capacity, as that (through the grace of God) they may bee eternally saved, *John.* 1. 7. *Acts* 17. 30. *Mar* 6. 6. *Heb.* 3. 10, 18, 19. 1 *Joh.* 5. 10. *Joh.* 3 17.

V. That such who first orderly comes into, and are brought up in the School of Christs Church, and waiting there, comes to degrees of Christianity, rightly qualified, and considerably gifted by Gods Spirit; ought to exercise their gifts not only in the Church, but also (as occasion serves) to preach to the World (they being approved of by the Church so to do) *Acts.* 11. 22, 23, 24. *Acts.* 11. 19, 20. and that among such some are to be chosen by the Church, and ordained by Fasting, Prayer, and Laying on of Hands, for the work of the Ministry, *Acts.* 13. 2 3. *Acts.* 1. 23. Such so ordained, (and abiding faithful in their works) we own as Ministers of the Gospel; but all such who come not first to repent of their sins, believe on the Lord Jesus, and so *Baptized* in his name for the remission of Sins, but are only brought up in the Schools of humane learning, to the attaining humane arts, and variety of languages, with many vain curiosities of speech, 1 *Cor.* 1. 19, 21. 2. 1, 4, 5. seeking rather the gain of large revenues, than the gain of souls to God: such (we say) we utterly deny, being such as have need rather to be taught themselves, than fit to teach others, *Rom.* 2. 21.

VI. That the way set forth by God for men to bee justified in, is by Faith in Christ, *Rom.* 5. 1.

That is to say, when men shall assent to the truth of the Gospel, beleeving with all their hearts, that there is remission of sins, and eternall life to bee had in Christ.

And that Christ therefore is most worthy their constant affections, and subjection to all his Commandements, and therefore resolve with purpose of heart so to subject unto him in all things, and no longer unto themselves, 2 *Cor.* 5. 15

And so, shall (with all godly sorrow for the sins past) commit themselves to his grace, confidently depending upon him for that which they beleeve is to bee had in him: such so beleeving are justified from all their sins, their faith shall bee accounted unto them for righteousnesse, *Rom.* 4. 22, 23, 24. & 3. 25, 26.

VII. That there is one Holy Spirit, the precious gift of God, freely given to such as *obey him*, *Ephes.* 4. 4. *Act.* 5. 32. that thereby they may bee throughly sanctified, and made able (without which they are altogether unable) to abide stedfast in the faith, and to honour the Father, and his Son Christ, the Authour and finisher of their Faith; 1 *Cor.* 6. 11. There are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father the Word, the Holy Spirit, and these three are one; 1 *John* 5. 7. which Spirit of Promise such have not yet received, (though they speak much of him) that are so farre out of *Love, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentlenesse, Goodnesse, Meeknesse, and Temperance*, (*the fruits of the Spirit*, Gal. 5, 22, 23.) as that they breathe out much cruelty, and great envy against the Liberties, and peaceable living of such, as are not of their judgment, though holy as to their conversations.

VIII. That God hath even before *the foundation of the World chosen*, (or elected) *to eternal life, such as beleeve*, and so are in Christ, *John.* 3. 16. *Ephes.* 1. 4. 2 *Thess.* 2. 13. yet confident wee are, that the purpose of God according to election, was not in the least arising from fore-seen faith in, or works of Righteousnesse done by the creature, but only from the mercy, goodnesse, and compassion dwelling in God, and so *it is of him that calleth*, *Rom.* 9. 11. whose purity and unwordable holiness, cannot admit of any unclean person (or thing) to be in his presence, therefore his decree of mercy reaches only the godly man, whom (saith *David*) God *hath set a part for himself*; Psal. 4. 3.

IX. That men not considered simply as men, but ungodly men, *were of old ordained to condemnation*, considered as such, who turn the grace of God into wantonnesse, and deny the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, *Jude* 4. God indeed sends a strong delusion to men, that they might bee damned; but wee observe that they are such (as saith the Apostle) that *received not the love of the truth, that they might bee saved*, 2 Thess. 2. 10, 11, 12. and so the indignation and wrath of God, is upon *every soul* of man that doth *evil*, (living & dying therein) *for there is no respect of persons with God*, Rom. 2. 9, 10, 11.

X. That all Children dying in Infancy, having not actually transgressed against the Law of God in their own persons, are only subject to the first death which comes upon them by the sin of the first *Adam*, from whence they shall bee all raised by the second *Adam*; and not that any one of them (dying in that estate) shall suffer for *Adams* sin, eternall punishment in Hell, (which is the second death) *for to such belongs the Kingdom of Heaven*, 1 Cor. 5. 22. Mar. 19. 14. not daring to conclude with that uncharitable opinion of others, who though they plead much for the bringing of Children into the Visible Church here on earth by *Baptism*, yet nevertheless by their Doctrine, that Christ dyed but for some, shut a great part of them out of the Kingdome of Heaven for ever.

XI. That the right and only way of gathering Churches, (according to Christs apointment, *Mat.* 28. 19, 20.) is first to teach, or preach the Gospel, *Marke* 16. 16. to the Sons and Daughters of men; and then to *Baptise* (that is in English to *Dip*) in the name of the Father, Son, and holy Spirit, or in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, such only of them, as profess *repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ*, Acts. 2. 38. Acts. 8. 12. Acts 18. 8. And as for all such who preach not this Doctrine, but instead thereof, that Scripture-less thing of sprinkling of Infants (*falsly called Baptisme*) whereby the pure *word of God is made of no effect*, and the new Testament-way of bringing in Members, into the Church by regeneration, cast out; when as the bond-woman & her son, that is to say, the old Testament-way of bringing in Children into the Church by generation, is cast out, as saith the Scripture, *Gal.* 4. 30, 22, 23. 24. *Mat.* 3. 8, 9. all such we utterly deny, forasmuch as we are commanded to *have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather to reprove them*, Ephes. 5. 11.

XII. That it is the duty of all such who are Beleevers Baptized, to draw nigh unto God in submission to that principle of Christs Doctrine, to wit, Prayer and laying on of Hands, that they may receive the promise of the Holy Spirit, *Heb.* 6. 1, 2. *Act.* 8. 12, 15, 17. *chap.* 19. 6. 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. Whereby they may *mortifie the deeds of the body*, Rom. 8. 13. and live in all things answerable to their professed intentions, and desires, even to the honour of him, *who hath called them out of darknesse into his marvellous light.*

XIII. That it is the duty of such, who are constituted as aforesaid, to continue stedfastly in Christs and the Apostles doctrine, and assembling together, in fellowship, in breaking of Bread, and Prayers, *Act.* 2. 42.

XIV. That although wee thus declare for the primitive way, and order of constituting Churches, yet wee verily beleeve, and also declare, that unlesse men so professing, and practizing the form and order of Christs Doctrin, shall also be attisfie the same with a Holy and Wise conversation, in all godlinesse and honesty; the profession of the visible form will be rendred to them of no effect; *for without holiness no man shall see the Lord*, Heb. 12. 14. Isa. 1. 11, 12, 15, 16.

XV. That the Elders or Pastors which God hath appointed to oversee, and feed his Church (constituted as aforesaid) are such, who first being of the number of Disciples, shall in time appear to *be vigilent, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach, &c. not greedy of filthy lucre* (as too many National Ministers are) *but patient*; *not a brawler, not covetous*, &c. and as such chose, and ordained to office (according to the order of Scripture, *Acts.* 14. 23.) who are to feed the flock with meat in due season, and in much love to rule over them, with all care, seeking after such as go astray; but as for all such who labour to feed themselves with the fat, more than to feed the flock, *Ezek.* 34. 2, 3. seeking more after theirs than them, expressly contrary to the practise of the Ministers of old, who said, *wee seek not yours, but you*, 2 Cor. 12. 14. All such wee utterly deny, and hereby bear our continued Testimony against them, as such whom the Prophets of old bore Testimony against, *Ezek.* 34.

XVI. That the Ministers of Christ, that have freely received from God, ought freely to minister to others, 1 *Cor.* 9. 17. and that such who have spirituall things freely ministred to them, ought freely to communicate necessary things to the Ministers (upon the account of their charge) 1 *Cor.* 9. 11. *Gal.* 6. 6. And as for Tythes, or any forced Maintenance, wee utterly deny to bee the Maintenance of Gospel-Ministers.

XVII. That the true Church of Christ, ought after the first and second admonition, to reject all Hereticks, *Tit.* 3. 10, 11. and in the name of the Lord to withdraw from all such, as profesle the way of the Lord, but walks disorderly in their conversations, 2 *Thess.* 3. 6. or any wayes causes divisions or offences, contrary to the Doctrine (of Christ) which they have learned, *Rom.* 16. 17.

XVIII. That such who are true Believers, even Branches in Christ the Vine (and that in his account, whom hee exhorts to abide in him, *Joh.* 15. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.) or such who have charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of Faith unfeigned, 1 *Tim.* 1. 5. may nevertheless for want of watchfulnesse, swerve and turn aside from the same, *vers.* 6, 7. and become as withered branches, cast into the fire and burned, *Joh* 15. 6. But such *who adde unto their Faith Vertue, and unto Vertue Knowledge, and unto Knowledge Temperance, &c.* 2 Pet. 1. 5, 6, 7. such *shall never fall*, ver. 8, 9, 10. 'tis impossible for all the false Christs, and false Prophets, that are, and are to come, to deceive such, for they are *kept by the power of God, through Faith unto Salvation*, 1 Pet. 1. 5.

XIX. That the poor Saints belonging to the Church of Christ, are to bee sufficiently provided for by the Churches, that they neither want food or rayment, and this by a free and voluntary contribution (and not of necessity, or by the constraint or power of the Magistrate) 2 *Cor.* 9. 7. 1 *Cor.* 8. 11, 12. and this through the free and voluntary help of the Deacons, (called Overseers of the poor) being faithfull men, chosen by the Church, and ordained by Prayer and Laying on of Hands, to that Work, *Act.* 6. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. So that there is no need in the Church of Christ, of a Magisteriall compulsion in this case, as there is among others, who being constituted in a fleshly and generationall way, are necessitated to make use of a carnall sword, to compell even a small, mean, and short Maintenance for their poor; when as many other members of their Churches, can and do part with great and large Sums of Money, to maintain their vain fashions, Gold, Pearls, and costly Array, which is expresly contrary to the Word of God, 1 *Tim.* 2. 9, 10. 1 *Pet.* 3. 3. Alasse, *What will such do when God riseth up, and when hee visiteth, what will they answer him?* Job 31. 14.

XX. That there shall bee (through Christ who was dead, but is alive again from the dead) a Resurrection of all men from the graves of the Earth, *Isa.* 26. 19. both the just and the unjust, *Acts* 24. 15. that is, the fleshly bodies of men, sown into the graves of the Earth, corruptible, dishonourable, weak, natural (which so considered cannot inherit the Kingdome of God) shall bee raised again, incorruptable, in glory, in power, spirituall, and so considered, the bodies of the Saints (united again to their spirits) which here suffer for Christ, shall inherit the Kingdom, *reigning* together with Christ, 1 *Cor.* 15 21, 22, 42, 43, 44, 49.

XXI. That there shall bee after the Resurrection from the graves of the Earth, *An eternall judgement*, at the appearing of Christ, and his Kingdom, 2 *Tim.* 4. 1. *Heb.* 9. 27. at which time of judgement, which is unalterable, and irrevocable, every man shall receive according to the things done in his body, 2 *Cor.* 5 10.

XXII. That the same Lord Jesus, who shewed himself alive after his passion, by many infallible proofs, *Act.* 1. 3. which was taken up from the Disciples, and carryed up into Heaven, *Luk.* 24. 51. *Shall so come in like manner as hee was seen go into Heaven*, Act. 1. 9, 10, 11. *And when Christ who is our life shall appear, wee shall also appear with him in glory*, Col. 3. 4. *For then shall hee bee King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*, Rev. 19. 16. for the Kingdom is his, and hee is the Governour among the Nations, *Psal.* 22. 28. and King over all the Earth, *Zech* 14. 9. *And wee shall reign (with him) on the Earth*, Rev. 5. 10. the Kingdoms of this world (which men so mightily strive after here to enjoy) shall become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and his Christ, *Rev.* 11. 15. for *all is yours*, (O yee that overcome this world) *for yee are Christs, and Christ is Gods*; 1 Cor. 3. 22, 23. *For unto the Saints shall bee given the Kingdome, and the greatnesse of the Kingdom, under* (mark that) *the whole Heaven*, Dan. 7. 27. Though (alasse) now many men bee scarce content that the Saints should have so much as a being among them; But when Christ shall appear, then shall bee their day, then shall bee given unto them power over the Nations, to rule them with a Rod of Iron, *Rev.* 2. 26, 27. then shall they receive a Crown of life, which no man shall take from them, nor they by any means turned, or overturned from it, for the oppressor shall bee broken in peeces, *Psal.* 72. 4 and their now vain rejoycings turned into mourning, and bitter Lamentations, as it is written *Job* 20. 5, 6, 7. *The triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the Hypocrite but for a moment*; *though his Excellency mount up to the Heavens, and his head reach unto the clouds, yet shall hee perish for ever, like his own dung*; *they which have seen him, shall say, where is hee?*

XXIII. That the holy Scripture is the rule whereby Saints both in matters of Faith, and conversation, are to be regulated, they being able to make men wise unto salvation, through Faith in Christ Jesus, profitable for Doctrine, for reproof, for instruction in righteousnes, that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works, 2 *Tim.* 3. 15, 16, 17. *John.* 20 31. *Isa.* 8. 20.

XXIV. That it is the will, and mind of God (in these Gospel times) that all men should have the free liberty of their own **Consciences** in matters of Religion, or Worship, without the least oppression, or persecution, as simply upon that account; and that for any in Authority otherwise to act, we confidently beleive is expresly contrary to the mind of Christ; who requires that whatsoever men would that others should do unto them, they should even so do unto others, *Mat* 7. 12. and that the Tares and the Wheat should grow together in the field, (which is the world) until the harvest (which is the end of the world,) *Mat.* 13. 29, 30, 38, 39.

XXV. Wee believe that there ought to be Civil Magistrats in all Nations, *for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well*, 1. Pet. 2. 14. and that all wicked lewdnes, and fleshly filthiness, contrary to just and wholesome (Civil) Laws, ought to be punished according to the nature of the offences; and this without respect of any Persons, Religion, or profession whatsoever; and *we* and all men are obliged by Gospel rules, to be subject to the higher Powers, to obey Magistrates, *Tit.* 3. 1. *and to submit to every Ordinance of man, for the Lords sake*, as saith *Peter.* 2. 13. But in case the Civil Power do, or shall at any time impose things about matters of Religion, which we through conscience to God cannot actually obey, then we with *Peter* also do say, that we ought (in such cases) to obey God rather than men, *Acts* 5. 29 and accordingly do hereby declare our whole, and holy intent and purpose, that (through the help of grace) we will not yeild, nor (in such cases) in the least actually obey them; yet humbly purposing (in the Lords strength) patiently to suffer whatsoever shall be inflicted upon us, for our conscionable forbearance.

These things (O ye Sons and Daughters of Men) we verily believe to be the Lords will and mind, and therefore cannot but speak, and if herein wee differ from many, yea from multitudes, from the learned, the wise and prudent of this World, we (with *Peter* and *John*) do herein make our solemne, and serious appeale, namely, *whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto men*, (of a contrary perswasion) *more than unto God?* Oh let the judicious, judge righteous judgment! *Acts.* 4. 19, 20.

And in the beleef, and practise of these things, (it being the good old Apostolical way) our souls have found that rest, and soulpeace, which the world knows not, and which they cannot take from us; of whom then should we be afraid? *God is become our strength, our light, our salvation; therefore*, are wee resolved (through grace) to seal the truth of these things in way of suffering persecution, not only to the los of our goods, freedomes, or liberties, but with our lives also (if called thereunto.)

Moreover we do utterly, and from our very hearts in the Lords fear, declare against all those wicked, and devillish reports, and reproaches, fally cast upon us, as though some of us (in & about the City of *London*) had lately **gotten Knives, hooked Knives**, & the like, & great store of Arms besides what was given forth by order of Parliament, intending to cut the throats of such as were contrary minded to us in matters of Religion, and that many such **Knives**, and Armes, for the carrying on some secret design, hath been found in some of our houses by search; we say, from truth of heart, in the Lords fear, that wee do utterly abhor, and abominate the thoughts thereof, and much more the actions; and do hereby challenge both City, and Country (in our innocency herein) as being not able to prove the things whereof they accuse us; and do for evermore declare the Inventors of such reports, to bee lyers, and wicked devisers of mischief, and corrupt designs: God that is above all will justifie our innocency herein, who well knows our integrity, in what we here declare; the Lord lay it not to their charge.

In the time of building the decayed House of *God*, Sanballat, & Tobiah, (*wicked Counsellors*) *hired* Shemaiah *to make good* Nehemiah *afraid*; and labouted against him, that they might have *matter for an evil report*, that they might reproach him, & hinder the building of the house of God; Neh. 6. 12. *For I have heard* (*saith the Prophet*) *the defaming of many, Report, say they, and we will report it*, Jer. 20. 10.

Subscribed by certain Elders, Deacons, and Brethren met at *London*, in the first Month (called *March*, 1660.) in the behalf of themselves, and many others unto whom they belong, in *London*, and in several Counties of this Nation, Who are of the same Faith with Us.

Joseph Wright.	*Matthew Caffen,*	*John Clarion,*
William Jeffery,	*Samuel Loveday,*	*Thomas Seele,*
Thomas Monck,	*John Parsons,* Senior,	*Michael Whitlear*
John Hartnel,	*Thomas Stacy,*	*Giles Browne,*
Benjamine Morley,	*Edward Stanley,*	*John Wells,*
Francis Stanley,	*Jonathan Gennings,*	*Stephen Torie,*
George Hammon,	*John Hammersly,*	*Thomas Lathwel,*
William Smart,	*William Russel,*	*William Chadwel,*
John Reeve,	*Joseph Keeich,*	*William Ralph,*
Thomas Parrot,	*Nicholas Newberry,*	*Henry Browne,*
John Wood,	*Samuel Lover,*	*William Paine,*
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Humphrey Jones	*Thomas Grantham,*	

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