



Confession of Faith Ratification Act 1690

1690 CHAPTER 7

Act Ratifying the Confession of Faith and settleing Presbyterian Church Government.

X1

X2

Annotations:

Editorial Information

- X1** Short title given by [Statute Law Revision Scotland Act 1964 \(c. 80\)](#), [Sch. 2](#)
- X2** This Act is listed in 12mo edition as [1690 c. 5](#)

Our Sovereigne Lord and Lady The King and Queens Majesties and three estates of Parliament Conceiveing it to be their bound duty after the great deliverance that God hath lately wrought for this Church and Kingdom In the first place to settle and secure therein the true protestant Religion according to the truth of Gods word as it hath of a long tyme been professed within this Land, as also the Government of Christs Church within this Nation agreeable to the word of God and most conducive to the advancement of true piety and Godliness and the establishing of peace and tranquillity within this Realme And that by ane Article of the Claime of Right It is declared that prelacie and the superiority of any office in the Church above presbyters Is and hath been a great and insupportable greivance and trouble to this Nation and contrary to the inclination of the generality of the people ever since the reformation they haveing reformed from popery by Presbiters and therefore ought to be abolished Lykeas by ane Act of the last Session of this Parliament Prelacie is abolished Therefore Their Majesties with advyce and consent of the saids three Estates Doe hereby revive ratifie and perpetually confirme all lawes statutes and acts of Parliament made against popery and papists and for the maintenance and preservation of the true reformed protestant religion and for the true Church of Christ within this kingdom In swa far as they confirme the same or are made in favours thereof Lykeas they by these presents Ratifie and establish the Confession of faith now read in their presence and voted and approven be them as the publick and avowed Confession of this Church containeing the summe and substance of the doctrine of the reformed Churches which Confession of faith is subjoynd to this present Act As also They doe establish Ratifie and confirme the presbyterian Church Government and discipline That is to say the Government of the Church by Kirke sessions presbyteries

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provinciall synods and Generall assemblies ratified and established by the 114 Act Ja: 6: parl: 12: Anno 1592 Entitled Ratification of the Liberty of the true kirke &c. And thereafter received by the generall consent of this Nation to be the only government of Christs Church within this Kingdome Reviveing Renewing and Confirmeing the forsaid act of Parliament in the haill heids thereof, except that part of it relateing to patronages which is hereafter to be taken into consideration And Rescinding Annulling and makeing voyd the Acts of Parliament following videlicet Act anent restitution of Bishops: Ja. 6: Parl. 18. Cap 2d Act Ratifieing the acts of the assembly 1610 Ja. 6. Parl: 21 Cap. 1st Act anent the Election of Archbishops and Bishops Ja: 6: Par: 22: Cap. 1st Act Entitled Ratification of the fyve articles of the generall assembly at Perth Ja: 6: Parl: 23: Cap: 1st Act Entitled for the restitution and re-establishment of the Ancient Government of the Church by Archbishops and Bishops Char : 2 : Par: 1st Sess: 2: Act 1st Act anent the Constitution of a national synod Char: 2: Par: 1st Sess: 3d Act 5th Act agt such as refuse to depone against delinquents Char: 2: Par: 2d: Sess: 2d: Act 2d Act entitled Act acknowledging and asserting the right of succession to the Imperiall Crowne of Scotland Char: 2: Par: 3d act 2d Act entitled Act anent Religion and the Test Char: 2d Par: 3, Act 6th with all other Acts Lawes statutes ordinances and proclamations And that in sua far allennerly as the saids Acts and others generally and particularly above mentioned are contrary or prejudiciall to Inconsistent with or derogatory from the protestant Religion and presbyterian Government now established And allowing and Declareing that the Church Government be established in the hands of and exercised by these presbyterian ministers who were outed since the first of January 1661 for nonconformity to prelacie or not complying with the courses of the tyme and are now restored by the late Act of Parliament and such ministers and elders only as they have admitted or received or shall hereafter admitt or receave and also that all the said Presbiterian Ministers have and shall have right to the maintenance, rights and other priveledges by Law provyded to the ministers of Christs Church within this kingdom as they are or shall be legally admitted to particular Churches . . . ^{F1} And to the effect the disorders that have hapned in this Church may be redressed Their Majesties with advyce and consent forsaid Doe hereby allow the Generall meeting and representatives of the forsaid presbyterian ministers and Elders in whose hands the exercise of the Church Government is established either by themselves or by such Ministers and elders as shall be appointed and authorised visitors by them according to the custom and practise of Presbyterian Government throughout the whole kingdom and severall parts thereof to try and purge out all Insufficient, negligent, scandalous and erroneous Ministers by due course of ecclesiasticall processes and censures and likewayses for redressing all other Church disorders And further it is hereby provyded that whatsoever Minister being conveyened before the said Generall meeting and representatives of the presbyterian ministers and elders or the visitors to be appointed by them shall either prove contumacious in not compearing or be found guilty and shall be therefore censured whether by suspension or deposition they shall ipso facto be suspended from or depyvded of their stipends and benefices And ordaines this Act to be printed and published

Annotations:

Amendments (Textual)

F1 Words repealed by [Statute Law Revision \(Scotland\) Act 1906 \(c. 38\)](#)

THE CONFESSION OF FAITH under written was this day produced read and considered word by word in presence of their Majesties High Commissioner and the

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Estates of Parliament and being voted and approven was ordained to be recorded in the bookes of Parliament off the which CONFESSIO OF FAITH the Tenor followes

CHAP. I. OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURE

ALTHOUGH the light of Nature and works of Creation and Providence do so far manifest the goodness wisdom and power of God as to leave men inexcusable yet are they not sufficient to give that knowledge of God and of his will which is necessary unto salvation Therefore it pleased the Lord at sundry times and in divers maners to reveal himself and to declare that his will unto his Church and afterwards for the better preserving and propagating of the truth and for the more sure establishment and comfort of the Church against the corruption of the flesh and the malice of Satan and of the world to commit the same wholly unto writing which maketh the Holy Scripture to be most necessary those former wayes of Gods revealing his will unto his people being now ceased

2 UNDER the name of the Holy Scripture or the word of God written are now contained all the books of the Old and New Testament which are these Of The Old Testament Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy Joshua Judges Ruth I Samuel II Samuel I Kings II Kings I Chronicles II Chronicles Ezra Nehemiah Esther Job Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes The Song of Songs Isaiah Jeremiah Lamentations Ezekiel Daniel Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah Jonah Micah Nahum Habbakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi Of The New Testament The Gospels according to Matthew Mark Luke John The Acts of the Apostles Pauls Epistles to the Romans I Corinthians II Corinthians Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians I Thessalonians II Thessalonians I to Timothy II to Timothy to Titus to Philemon The Epistle to the Hebrews The Epistle of James The first and second Epistles of Peter The first second and third Epistles of John The Epistle of Jude The Revelation of John All which are given by inspiration of God to be the rule of faith and life

3 THE Books commonly called Apocrypha not being of divine inspiration are no part of the Canon of the Scripture and therefore are of no authority in the Church of God nor to be any otherwise approved or made use of than other human writings

4 THE authority of the Holy Scripture for which it ought to be believed and obeyed dependeth not upon the testimony of any man or Church but wholly upon God (who is truth it self) the author thereof and therefore it is to be received because it is the Word of God

5 We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the Church to an high and reverent esteem of the Holy Scripture And the heavenliness of the matter the efficacy of the doctrine the majesty of the style the consent of all the parts the scope of the whole (which is to give all glory to God) the full discovery it makes of the only way of mans salvation the many other incomparable excellencies and the entire perfection thereof are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence it self to be the Word of God yet notwithstanding our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine

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authority thereof is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts

6

The whole counsell of God concerning all things necessary for his own glory mans salvation faith and life is either expresly set down in Scripture or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture unto which nothing at any time is to be added whether by new revelations of the Spirit or traditions of men nevertheless we acknowledge the inward illumination of the Spirit of God to be necessary for the saving understanding of such things as are revealed in the word and that there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God and government of the Church common to human actions and societies which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence according to the generall rules of the word which are always to be observed

7

ALL things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves nor alike clear unto all yet those things which are necessary to be known believed and observed for salvation are so clearly propounded and opened in some place of Scripture or other that not only the learned but the unlearned in a due use of the ordinary means may attain to a sufficient understanding of them

8

THE OLD Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old) and the New Testament in Greek (which at the time of the writing of it was most generally known to the nations) being immediatly inspired by God and by his singular care and providence kept pure in all ages are therefore authenticall so as in all controversies of Religion the Church is finally to appeal unto them but because these originall tongues are not known to all the people of God who have right unto and interest in the Scriptures and are commanded in the fear of God to read and search them therefore they are to be translated into the vulgar language of every nation unto which they come that the word of God dwelling plentifully in all they may worship him in an acceptable manner and through patience and comfort of the Scriptures may have hope

9

THE infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture it self and therefore when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture (which is not manifold but one) it must be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly

10

THE supreme judge by which all controversies of Religion are to be determined and all decrees of Councils opinions of ancient writers doctrines of men and private spirits are to be examined and in whose sentence we are to rest can be no other but the holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture

CHAP. II. OF GOD AND THE HOLY TRINITY

- 1
THERE is but one only living and true God who is infinite in being and perfection a most pure spirit invisible without body parts or passions immutable immense eternall incomprehensible almighty most wise most holy most free most absolute working all things according to the counsell of his own immutable and most righteous will for his own glory most loving gracious mercifull long suffering abundant in goodness and truth forgiving iniquity transgression and sin the rewarder of them that diligently seek him and withall most just and terrible in his judgements hating all sin and who will by no means clear the guilty
- 2
GOD hath all life glory goodness blessedness in and of himself and is alone in and unto himself all sufficient not standing in need of any creatures which he hath made nor deriving any glory from them but only manifesting his own glory in by unto and upon them He is the alone fountain of all being of whom through whom and to whom are all things and hath most sovereign dominion over them to do by them for them or upon them whatsoever himself pleaseth In his sight all things are open and manifest his knowledge is infinite infallible and independent upon the creature so as to him nothing is contingent or uncertain He is most holy in all his counsells in all his works and in all his commands To him is due from angels and men and every other creature whatsoever worship service or obedience he is pleased to require of them
- 3
IN the unity of the Godhead there be three persons of one substance power and eternity God the Father God the Son and God the Holy Ghost The Father is of none neither begotten nor proceeding the Son is eternally begotten of the Father the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son

CHAP. III. OF GODS ETERNAL DECREE

- 1
GOD from all eternity did by the most wise and holy counsell of his own will freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass yet so as thereby neither is God the author of sin nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away but rather established
- 2
ALTHOUGH God knows whatsoever may or can come to pass upon all supposed conditions yet hath he not decreed any thing because he foresaw it as future or as that which would come to pass upon such conditions
- 3
BY the decree of God for the manifestation of his glory some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life and others foreordained to everlasting death
- 4
THOSE angels and men thus predestinated and foreordained are particularly and unchangeably designed and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished