

purpose? They answered, to . . . set me right about the matter of church government, and the Solemn League and Covenant. I replied they might save themselves the trouble, for I had no scruples about it; and that settling church government and preaching about the Solemn League and Covenant was not my plan. I then told them something about my experience, and how I was led out into my present way of acting. One, in particular, said he was deeply affected; and dear Mr. Erskine desired they would have patience with me; for that, having been born and bred in England, and having never studied the point, I could not be supposed to be so perfectly acquainted with the nature of their covenants. One, much warmer than the rest, immediately replied that no indulgence was to be shown me; that England had revolted most with respect to church government . . . I asked them seriously what they would have me to do? The answer was that I was not desired to subscribe immediately to the Solemn League and Covenant, but to preach only for them till I had further light. I asked, 'Why only for them?' Mr. Ralph Erskine said they were the Lord's people. I then asked whether there were no other Lord's people but themselves? and, supposing all others were devil's people, they certainly had more need to be preached to; and therefore, I was more and more determined to go out into the highways and hedges; and that if the Pope himself would lend me his pulpit, I would gladly proclaim the righteousness of Christ therein. . . The consequence of all this was an open breach. I retired; I wept; I prayed; and after preaching in the fields, sat down and dined with them and took a final leave."

No one is to blame for the disagreement between Whitefield and the Secession. Both parties were evangelical, but the Erskines, as I have said, were the High Churchmen of the times, holding the views of the Reformation, it is true, but in their later and stereotyped edition which identified the Gospel with Presbyterian forms of government and belief. Whitefield stood at the point to which, through religious and in-