

DECLARATION
OF THE
FAITH, CHURCH ORDER AND DISCIPLINE

OF THE
Congregational Church

IN THE
BRITISH EMPIRE.

FIRST ISSUED BY THE CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF ENGLAND
AND WALES, MAY, 1833.

PRELIMINARY NOTE.

Congregational Churches do not impose any form of Creed as a condition of membership or even of office. The following statement is, therefore, only a summary of what it commonly held and taught among them. They are, however, closely agreed in their belief and practice, and it is probable that there is no Church or Minister of their number who would deny the substance of any one of the following doctrines:—

PRINCIPLES OF RELIGION.

- I. Congregational churches believe the Scriptures of the Old Testament, as received by the Jews, and the books of the New Testament, as received by the Primitive Christians from the Evangelists and Apostles, to be divinely inspired, and of supreme authority. These writings, in the languages in which they were originally composed, are to be consulted, with the aids of sound criticism, as a final appeal in all controversies; but the common version they consider to be adequate to the ordinary purposes of Christian instruction and edification.
- II. They believe in One God, essentially wise, holy, just, and good; eternal, infinite, and immutable in all natural and moral perfections; the Creator, Supporter, and Governor of all beings, and of all things.
- III. They believe that God is revealed in the Scriptures as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and that to each are attributable the same Divine properties and perfections. The doctrine of the Divine existence, as above stated, they cordially believe, without attempting fully to explain.
- IV. They believe that man was created after the Divine image, sinless, and, in his kind, perfect.
- V. They believe that the first man disobeyed the Divine command, fell from his state of innocence and purity, and involved all his posterity in the consequences of that fall.