

DECLARATION OF FAITH AND CHURCH ORDER.

the Son of God ; partaking fully and truly of human nature, though without sin, — equal with the Father, and “ the express image of his person.”

X. They believe that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, revealed, either personally in his own ministry, or by the Holy Spirit in the ministry of his apostles, the whole mind of God, for our salvation ; and that, by his obedience to the Divine law while he lived, and by his sufferings unto death, he meritoriously “ obtained eternal redemption for us ;” having thereby vindicated and illustrated Divine justice, “ magnified the law,” and “ brought in everlasting righteousness.”

XI. They believe that, after his death and resurrection, he ascended up into heaven, where, as the Mediator, he “ ever liveth ” to rule over all, and to “ make intercession for them that come unto God by him.”

XII. They believe that the Holy Spirit is given in consequence of Christ’s mediation, to quicken and renew the hearts of men ; and that his influence is indispensably necessary to bring a sinner to true repentance to produce saving faith, to regenerate the heart, and to perfect our sanctification.

XIII. They believe that we are justified through faith in Christ, as “ the Lord our righteousness ;” and not “ by the works of the Law.”

XIV. They believe that all who will be saved were the objects of God’s eternal and electing love, and were given by an act of Divine sovereignty to the Son of God ; which in no way interferes with the system of means, nor with the grounds of human responsibility ; being wholly unrevealed as to its objects, and not a rule of human duty.

XV. They believe that the Scriptures teach the final perseverance of all true believers to a state of eternal blessedness, which they are appointed to obtain through constant faith in Christ, and uniform obedience to his commands.

XVI. They believe that a holy life will be the necessary effect of a true faith, and that good works are the certain fruits of a vital union to Christ.

XVII. They believe that the sanctification of true Christians, or their growth in the graces of the Spirit, and meetness for heaven, is gradually carried on through the whole period during which it pleases God to continue them in the present life ; and that, at death, their souls perfectly freed from all remains of evil, are immediately received into the presence of Christ.

XVIII. They believe in the perpetual obligation of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper : the former to be administered to all converts to Christianity and their children, by the application of water to the subject, “ in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ;” and the latter to be celebrated by Christian churches as a token of faith in the Saviour, and of brotherly love.

XIX. They believe that Christ will finally come to judge the whole human race, according to their works ; that the bodies of the dead will be raised again ; and that, as the Supreme Judge, he will divide the righteous from the wicked, will receive the righteous into “ life everlasting,” but send away the wicked into “ everlasting punishment.”

XX. They believe that Jesus Christ directed his followers to live together in Christian fellowship, and to maintain the communion of saints ; and that, for this purpose, they are jointly to observe all Divine ordinances, and maintain that church order and discipline, which is either expressly enjoined by inspired institution, or sanctioned by the undoubted example of the apostles and of apostolic churches.

PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH ORDER AND DISCIPLINE.

1. The Congregational Churches hold it to be the will of Christ that true believers should voluntarily assemble together to observe religious ordinances, to promote mutual edification and holiness, to perpetuate and propagate the Gospel in the world, and to advance the glory and worship of God, through Jesus Christ ; and that each society of believers, having these objects in view in its formation, is properly a Christian church.