
THE BLUE BANNER

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Josiah, Erastianism, and National Covenanting Part Two by Al Hembd

[Editor's Note: This is the second paper of a series that originally were email posts to FPCR's Internet discussion group, *The Westminster Forum*. Mr. Hembd wrote his articles as part of a discussion of George Gilliespie's 17th century tract, *Wholesome Severity Reconciled with Christian Liberty*.]

II. MAY THE CHRISTIAN MAGISTRATE TODAY MAKE HIS PEOPLE STAND TO THE COVENANT OF GOD?

As we examine this question of whether a Christian magistrate may today cause the people of his jurisdiction to stand to the covenant of God, we shall find three things:

First, the civil magistrate as the minister of God must enforce God's Moral Law through just and equitable laws. These statutes must be framed so as to enforce the Moral Law.

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Second, the civil magistrate must "Kiss the Son" (Psalm 2:12) in fear and trembling, *in his public capacity* as the civil magistrate. Nations as nations are bound now to serve Him (Ps. 72:11 and Is. 60:12; and therefore,

Third, it follows by necessity that the civil magistrate *must* endeavor to make his people to stand to the covenant of God according to his particular station as magistrate.

This covenant may be inaugurated by an outward and formal vow, required of the people, and of the magistrate himself. A *de facto* covenant may exist without such formality, for actual practice of national adherence to the true religion, and enforcement of the Law of God on the part of the magistrate, may result in actual covenanting, without a formal covenant having been ratified.. Yet, a formal vow is much to be preferred because "an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife," Hebrews 6:16. That is, the taking of a formal oath to a national covenant settles once and for all where the nation as a nation really stands.

But now we deal with the first point more thoroughly. The civil magistrate, as the minister of God, must enforce the Moral Law, through just and equitable laws that uphold the righteousness of the Ten Commandments.

Let us examine Romans 13:1-6, which reads as follows: "1 - Let every soul be subject to the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. 2 - Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. 3 - For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that

which is good, and thou shalt have the praise of the same: 4 - For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. 5 - Wherefore, ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake. 6 - For, for this cause pay ye tribute also, for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.”

We must note the following things:

1) The civil magistrate is indeed the minister of God, ordained of God to a specific charge: verses 4 and 6.

2) He is specifically here ordained to two duties: to be a terror to evil works, and to be for a praise(τ) to them that do good works, verse 3 and 4.

3) He is ordained of God; therefore, to God is he accountable. And, being accountable to God, he is to minister according to God's standards. And the standard in God's sight for what constitutes good and evil is God's Word, specifically, the Law of God, which is the standard of all righteousness. Accordingly, the civil magistrate is the minister of God to enforce God's Law.

4) He is ordained of God, not to deal with matters of the heart; he is, to the contrary, to deal with matters of outward behavior. He is a terror to them that *do* evil, but he is for the praise of them that *do* well. As the minister of God, he judges *doing*. On the other hand, the ministers of the Gospel deal with matters of the heart in preaching sin, righteousness, and judgment; in preaching faith and repentance; in preaching Law and Gospel; and, as the Holy Ghost enables them, and blesses their labors, in applying these truths to the hearts of men.

5) Carefully take note that the standard of righteousness by which the magistrate is to judge outward behavior is the Moral Law, which is the *only* standard of morality for men. As Calvin rightly said, if one changes the judicial laws, he can do so without actually changing morality itself. That is to say, one could change an application of the law so as to adapt some of the penalties of the judicial laws to a given land. Alternatively, one could adopt additional laws that pertain to the morality of the Moral Law to the specific cultural practices of a given society. Both of these could be done without changing the standard as to what right and wrong are. However, one cannot change the Moral

Law, without changing the very standard of right and wrong. The Ten Commandments *as a whole* comprise that Moral Law by which magistrates must rule.

The Ten Commandments have no specific penalties for any of the sins condemned. That is because the Moral Law is neither a code of penalties for crimes nor a codex of rewards for well doing. The Moral Law instead is the very standard of what constitutes right and wrong. The penalties for infractions against the Moral Law can and may be adapted to the specific situations of a given culture. The Judicial Law given to Israel is just such an adaptation, given by Jehovah God of Israel to address it's specific culture.

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Calvin, in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, IV.xx.14, states as follows:

For there are some who deny that any commonwealth is rightly framed which neglects the law of Moses, and is ruled by the common law of nations. How perilous and seditious these views are, let others see: for me it is enough to demonstrate that they are stupid and false. We must attend to the well-known division which

distributes the whole law of God, as promulgated by Moses, into the moral, the ceremonial, and the Judicial Law, and we must attend to each of these parts, in order to understand how far they do, or do not, pertain to us. Meanwhile, let no one be moved by the thought that the judicial and ceremonial laws relate to morals. For the ancients who adopted this division, though they were not unaware that the two latter classes had to do with morals, did not give them the name of moral, because they might be changed and abrogated without affecting morals. They give this name specially to the first class, without which, true holiness of life and an immutable rule of conduct cannot exist.

The judicial penalties of a nation may be altered according to Calvin, without changing the standard of what constitutes right and wrong. However, the Ten Commandments cannot be changed, without changing the standard of what is moral and what is not. The Ten Commandments clearly delineate for us what constitutes right and wrong.

Blasphemy, idolatry, and Sabbath breaking are specific sins condemned by the Ten Commandments. Since the civil magistrate is to be the minister of God to punish all evil doers, he must then punish blasphemers, idolaters, Sabbath-breakers, and followers after other gods. He must restrain such crimes, because they are sins against God's Law, and are therefore evil. The civil magistrate has a commission from God. He is ordained of God to be a terror to them that do evil. He does not bear the sword in vain in this regard. As a minister of God, he must answer to God.

Accordingly, the standard by which the magistrate must judge what is evil and what is good must be the word of God, specifically, the law of God (that is, the Moral Law). "By the Law is the knowledge of sin," Romans 3:20. If the civil magistrate is to know what sin is so as to punish it, he must study the Law of God. And he must punish outward infractions of that Law for the magistrate is to deal with outward behavior, i.e. he deals with the *doings* of men, whether they be good or bad.

Similarly, the magistrate must reward good works. The knowledge of what constitutes a good work also comes from the law of God: see I Cor. 7:19, I John 2:3-5. Good works, as the *Heidelberg Catechism* correctly teaches, are works done out of faith, in accordance with the law of God, to the glory of God. If the magistrate is faithfully to discharge his commission from God, he must resort to the law. It is only by reference to God's law that he can determine what is good. It is only in

reference to the Moral Law that he can promote good within his realm; determine what is evil within his realm; and repress the said evil with the sword given him by the Lord of heaven and earth.

When the magistrate fails to punish any outward transgression of God's Law, to that extent he has failed in his commission from God, and will be judged accordingly (Ps. 82). Blasphemy, idolatry, and Sabbath-breaking are all crimes in the sight of the holy God of heaven and earth. Accordingly, the great God of heaven and of earth has ordained "gods" under Him (Ps. 82), to repress these crimes, as well as crimes against the second table of the law.

Regarding the degree of severity the magistrate may choose to punish Sabbath-breaking, idolatry, and blasphemy, the magistrate is now at some liberty to determine these things.

Regarding the degree of severity the magistrate may choose to punish Sabbath-breaking, idolatry, and blasphemy, the magistrate is now at some liberty to determine these things. I qualify this statement somewhat by saying that the civil magistrate is also free, if he so wishes, to enforce the penalties of the Civil Law with regards to those commandments regulating moral behavior. No one could rightly say of a civil magistrate, for example, that if he punished adultery with death he is unrighteous. Such a statement as that would be to accuse God himself of unrighteousness. That was precisely the punishment God Himself assigned in the Judicial Law. Thus, if the magistrate regards it best for his jurisdiction and for the glory of God, he has some freedom in punishing crimes against the Ten Commandments.

As the civil law as a body of laws has now expired, the magistrate is also free to determine whether to punish certain crimes at certain seasons more severely than that which is mandated in the Judicial Law. It is also the case that he may in other instances be more lenient.

Calvin comments as follows on how the magistrate may adapt the Moral Law to the peculiar moral situation of his people:

...The Judicial Law, given them (i.e., the Jews) as a kind of polity, delivered certain forms of equity and justice, by which they might live together together innocently and quietly. And as that exercise in ceremonies properly pertained to the doctrine of piety, inasmuch as it kept the Jewish Church in the worship and religion

of God, yet was still distinguishable from piety itself, so the judicial form, though it looked only to the best method of preserving that charity which is enjoined by the eternal law of God, was still something distinct from the precept of love itself. Therefore, as the ceremonies might be abrogated without at all interfering with piety, so, also, when these judicial arrangements are removed, the duties and precepts or charity can still remain perpetual. But if it is true that each nation has been left at liberty to enact the laws which it judges to be beneficial, still these are always to be tested by the rule of charity, so that while they vary in form, they must proceed on the same principle...¹

What I have said will become plain if we attend, as we ought, to two things connected with all laws--viz. the enactment of the law, and the equity on which the enactment is founded and rests. Equity, as it is natural, cannot be the same in all, and therefore ought to be proposed by all laws, according to the nature of the thing enacted. As constitutions have some circumstances on which they partly depend, there is nothing to prevent their diversity, provided they all alike aim at equity as their end. Now, as it is evident that the Law of God which we call moral, is nothing else than the testimony of natural law, and of that conscience which God has engraven on the minds of men, the whole of this equity of which we now speak is prescribed in it. Hence it alone ought to be the aim, the rule, and the end of all laws. Wherever laws are formed after this rule, directed to this aim, and restricted to this end, there is no reason why they should be disapproved by us, however much they may differ from the Jewish law, or from each other (August. *de Civ. Dei, Lib. xix. c. 17*). The Law of God forbids to steal. The punishment appointed for theft in the civil polity of the Jews may be seen in Exodus xxii. Very ancient laws of other nations punished theft by exacted double of what was stolen, while subsequent laws made a distinction between theft manifest and not manifest. Other laws went the length of punishing with exile, or with branding, while others made the punishment capital. Among the Jews, the punishment of false witness was "to do unto him as he had thought to have done with his brother" (Deut. xix. 19). In some countries, the punishment is infamy, in others hanging, in others crucifixion. All laws alike avenge murder with blood, but the kinds of death are different. In some countries, adultery was punished more severely, in others more leniently. Yet we see that amidst this diversity they all tend to the same end. For they all with one mouth declare against those crimes which are condemned by th This is not necessary, nor even expedient. There many be a country which, if murder were not visited with fearful punishments, would

instantly become a prey to robbery and slaughter. There may be an age requiring that the severity of punishments should be increased...One nation might be more prone to a particular vice, were it not most severely repressed...²

Thus, the magistrate may find in his particular nation that it is necessary to punish some offenses more severely than the Judicial Law would.

Thus, the magistrate may find in his particular nation that it is necessary to punish some offenses more severely than the Judicial Law would. At other times or in other places the magistrate may find himself compelled to punish more leniently than would the Judicial Law. Calvin does allow for either. In some nations, adultery was punished more leniently than the Judicial Law punished it. In other nations robbery was punished by exacting twofold of that which was taken, which is a more lenient punishment than that of the Judicial Law. Yet, in other nations, where robbery and slaughter were pandemic, it may become necessary to punish both with immediate death.

There well may be times of great civil disorder today that may merit uncommon severity in punishments. In a city where a significant part of the population suddenly gave themselves to wholesale pillaging, looting, and beatings (e.g. the riots in South Los Angeles), it may become necessary to institute martial law. The local citizens may need to be admonished to observe a curfew, perhaps even on pain of death, until law and order can be restored.

In some lands where the Gospel is having much success, there may be a restraining influence even upon the unconverted by the preaching of the Gospel. Where such influence is present the need for severity in the civil laws may become less needed. In such instances, the magistrate may determine that it is more appropriate, as an initial punishment, to fine Sabbath-breakers or to imprison blasphemers, rather than immediately executing them as was allowed in the Judicial Law.

The magistrate could well reason along these lines: the OT dispensation was one, relatively speaking, that had less of the "spirit of adoption," and more of the "spirit of bondage." Being as grace was not manifested so freely then, the persons under that covenant (which was a unique form of the covenant for the Church in its

¹ *Institutes. IV.xx.15*

² *Institutes. IV.xx.16*

infancy) were more dependent upon the threatenings of Sinai to keep them in line. Hence it was that the inspired Paul refers to that dispensation of the covenant of grace, relatively speaking, as “the spirit of bondage,” Rom. 8:15. There was more Law and less Gospel set forth to the Church in those times; hence, the severity of many of the punishments, such that death was the immediate punishment allowed or even required for those who desecrated the Sabbath, or who blasphemed, etc.

There was then more of the thundering of Sinai, and less of the sweet wooing of the covenant of peace sent forth from the crucified Saviour now exalted upon Mount Zion in heaven. The civil magistrate now under Gospel times, particularly in a nation where the Gospel is experiencing considerable success, could well reason that by promoting the true Gospel in one's realm, and by affording sinners of the above transgressions more opportunities for repentance he is doing his duty as a minister of God.

But it is essential that the magistrate *punish* said offenses. ... In such punishing he enforces the righteousness of the Moral Law, even though he may opt not to punish each offense with the exact severity mandated in the OT Judicial Law.

But it is essential that the magistrate *punish* said offenses. Is idolatry immoral, or no? Is blasphemy immoral, or no? Is blasphemy against God's Word immoral, or no? Is Sabbath-breaking immoral, or no? Are not these offenses “evil-doing?” The magistrate, as the minister of God, is then duty-bound to punish these offenses. In such punishing he enforces the righteousness of the Moral Law, even though he may opt not to punish each offense with the exact severity mandated in the OT Judicial Law.

If we say that these offenses are not immoral, do we not call God a liar? If we say that magistrates are to punish evil-doing, but not these offenses which are against the First Table of the Law, do we not set aside God's standard of what is evil-doing, and what is well-doing? How is the magistrate being faithful as a true minister of God, then, when he sets aside the righteousness of God, in determining for himself what *constitutes* good and evil doing?

Some cavil that chapter 13 of Romans deals only with offenses of the Second Table, given the context of the chapter, which begins to deal with Second Table

duties immediately after the discourse on the civil magistrate. To which I reply: it is true that the discourse on the civil magistrate is immediately followed by Second Table duties, and that therefore, God's ordinance of the civil magistrate does indeed serve to further the practice of Second Table duties in the populace. However, though the civil magistrate does serve to further social cooperation and social peace through the enforcement of Second Table duties, this by no means negates the duty of the magistrate, as he is the minister of God, to First Table duties as well. Is not piety the foundation of all true charity? Is not the social welfare of a nation dependent upon outward piety and recognition of God and His holy Word? Accordingly, even for the social welfare of the nation and for the furtherance of Second Table duties, the civil magistrate is duty bound to further outward piety amongst the citizens of the commonwealth.

The civil magistrate is the minister of God. This calling of God is also upon heathen magistrates. They, too, whether they acknowledge it or not, are ministers of God. They are not ministers of Jesus Christ, that is, ministers of Christ's Church. The ministers of Jesus Christ are like the seven stars in Christ's right hand; those ministers, who are ministers in Christ's Mediatorial Kingdom, the Church, are directly under the Mediatorial Headship of Christ. Civil magistrates *as magistrates* are not directly under the Mediatorial government of Christ. Rather, magistrates *as magistrates* are under the direct government of God, and are thus under the government of Christ as He is God the Son, not as He is Christ the Mediator. Thus, a magistrate's not being himself a child of grace, and thus not being personally under the Mediatorial government of Christ, in no wise exempts him from his being under the rule of and directly answerable to Christ as God the Son, the ruler of all things. For Christ, as He is God the Son, has authority over all things, both within His Mediatorial kingdom, and without it.

The civil magistrate is the minister of God. Whether he is personally under the Mediatorial reign of grace or not, he is still under God's direct authority, as he is fulfilling an ordinance and institution of God. He is answerable to God to enforce God's standard of doing good and to by God's own standard. Hence, he is duty bound to enforce the righteousness of God's Law as it is found in both Tables. And that is his office whether he be a professing Christian, or a heathen.

For more on how that the magistrate is under Christ the Son, and how that, therefore, he is not as a magistrate under Christ the Mediator, and that, therefore, heathen and Christian magistrates alike are responsible to Christ as God the Son, I refer the reader again to "Aaron's Rod Blossoming," by George Gillespie, Book 2, Chapters 5 and 6.

This concludes the discussion of this point concerning the civil magistrate's responsibilities to enforce the whole Moral Law of the Ten Commandments, both Tables. We now consider the obligation of the magistrate to "kiss the Son," to acknowledge the Headship of Christ over the nations as "King of nations;" to pay due respect to His Name, His Word, and His Cause.

Psalm 2:10-12 make the following command to magistrates, to kings, to "judges of the earth:" "Be wise now, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish in the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him."

Kings and judges of the earth, *in their public capacities*, are to serve the LORD with fear. They are to "rejoice with trembling;" that is, they are to rejoice in the LORD's goodness in the calling they have to serve Him as the ministers of God. And they are to rejoice with trembling, which is to say that they must consider the gravity of their calling. They must serve the LORD in that calling, and not themselves. They must rule by His commandments; they must further His Cause and His Word in their realms.

They must "kiss the Son." This figurative act entails two things: reverence and love. "If ye love Me, keep My commandments," says the Lord Christ in John 14:15. Civil magistrates are to manifest, then, their homage, their submission, reverence, and love to Christ, as "King of nations," Jer. 10:7. They are to do so by ruling in His fear: "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God," II Sam. 23:3. The magistrate must reverence the Son; he must rule in the righteousness of the Law of God. But he must also promote the Cause of Christ in his realm. They that would love Christ must also love His people. They must love the true Church. Civil magistrates must manifest their love to Christ by furthering the Cause of the true Church in their realms; they are *obligated* to do so,

whether they actually will or not. "For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee [that is, the true Zion of God - AH] will perish, yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted," Is. 60:11.

"Be wise now, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish in the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him."

Hence, for the good of their realms, it is imperative that the judges of the earth kiss the Son by serving the true Zion of God; the true Church; the Church that is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone," cf. Eph. 2:20. They may not serve ANY organization that arrogates to itself the name of "church." They certainly may not render their homage and allegiance to that anti-Christ system that has the "man of sin, the son of perdition," at its head: namely, the Roman Church.

Serving Antichrist is not "kissing the Son;" to the contrary, it is open insurrection against Him. Thus, in Is. 60:11-12, the Zion alluded to here, to which magistrates are duty bound to render their service, to which they are duty bound to "bring unto her the forces of the Gentiles" (i. e., their financial resources), is the true Church, the Church which is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone." It is that Church which is "the pillar and ground of the truth," I Tim. 3:15. It is that Church that not only holds the Bible as the Word of God alone, but which also rightly divides the Word of truth, faithfully expounding the systems of doctrine within that Word, namely, the Law and the Gospel. (See Calvin's Commentary on I Tim. 3:15.)■

[To be continued in part III]

<p style="text-align: center;">This and many other fine articles from a Presbyterian and Reformed perspective can be found on the FPCR/Blue Banner web site. Our URL address is http://www.fpcr.org. Check under the What's New icon for the most current additions. Most of the contents of Blue Banner issues are also posted on our web site.</p>

Book Review: The Christian Sabbath Examined, Defended, and Applied, by Brian M. Schwertley. Reviewed by Richard Bacon.

Brian M. Schwertley's recent book, *The Christian Sabbath Examined, Defended and Applied*, is a welcome addition to modern Lord's Day literature. Schwertley begins his study lamenting the fact that the Sabbath is little respected or even understood in this day. This is a complaint that this reviewer shares with Mr. Schwertley, who is pastor of the RPCNA mission in Lansing, MI.

Because of this basic modern misunderstanding of the ordinance, Schwertley establishes early that the Sabbath is both a creation ordinance and a vital part of the moral law. Many today who oppose Sabbath observance do so in the mistaken idea that the weekly rest was somehow peculiar to Israel in the Old Testament. Some may think that the Sabbath was peculiar to Israel as a church under age (thus making the Sabbath part of the ceremonial laws). Others assume that the Sabbath may have been given to Israel as a nation peculiar in redemptive history (thus making the Sabbath part of the judicial law for OT Israel). But if the Sabbath is part of God's moral law, then it is no less binding today than is the prohibition against idolatry or blasphemy or murder.

The author interacts well with the view of "theonomic anti-Sabbatarians" such as Gary North that biblical Sabbath-keeping would mean the end of western civilization as we know it. Schwertley points out that North's objections to Sabbath keeping really amount to nothing but the time-honored tactic of erecting a straw man for the express purpose of demolishing it. North claims that certain professions key to an industrial economy preclude biblical Sabbath keeping. Of course the fact that a minimal amount of labor is necessary to keep a blast furnace running does not militate against Sabbath keeping. The fact that a farmer fed his livestock even prior to the industrial revolution did not mean that the Sabbath could not be kept in an agrarian economy. Thus it does not follow that certain works of necessity which are at the very fringes of consideration should be made the rule for that which is at the center of consideration.

There are two possible explanations for why people add to God's word. One is to make themselves feel

good because they have developed a list they can *keep*. That was the heart and soul of Pharisaism. The other explanation is that some use the additions to God's Word in order to ridicule God's righteous commandments. Thus the Puritans, for example, are not remembered today for who and what they were in reality, but for the Victorian caricature of them. Schwertley effectively exposes the theonomic opposition to Sabbath keeping for the caricature that it is.

Swertley explains that the Sabbath is a moral law, a positive law, and is a creation ordinance. Because the Sabbath has both a moral and creation aspect it must be for all men and not merely for Israel under the OT economy. As Schwertley says, "The institution of the Sabbath has its ground in the very fabric of creation, including man's nature." However, the Sabbath also has a positive element grounded on nothing other than God's revealed will.

God chose the last day of the week to be the Sabbath from creation to the resurrection of Christ. Since Christ's resurrection, the Sabbath has been on the first day of the week (the Christian Sabbath). According to Schwertley, when we understand the positive aspect of the Sabbath legislation it helps us to understand and explain to judaizing groups such as Seventh-day Adventists that God can change the day upon which the Sabbath is kept without breaking the Sabbath. The positive aspect of the Sabbath also helps us to understand how acts of necessity and mercy can be permitted on the Sabbath.

This reviewer does not agree altogether with Schwertley's conclusion that it follows from this positive aspect that man has the prerogative to *postpone* the Sabbath to another day of the week in the event of a natural catastrophe or other emergency. That idea rather ignores the import of Christ's resurrection and also places in the hands of men that which clearly is only in the hands of the Lord of the Sabbath, Christ himself.

This small booklet is well worth the reading and the price. It is also "posted" on the Internet at <http://www.reformed.com/pub/sabbath2.htm>, and it can be downloaded from that site.

The subject that would have been good to see in this booklet, but which is sadly lacking, is a discussion of the magistrate's role and responsibility toward the Sabbath.■

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Presently Pastor Bacon is preaching through Isaiah in the afternoon and has just begun preaching through Hebrews in the morning. Bacon follows a Puritan model of preaching. He has been preaching through Isaiah since November 1993. He is presently in the middle of chapter 53.

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**A Defense of George Gillespie's Authorship of
*Wholesome Severity Reconciled with Christian
Liberty* By Chris Coldwell**

There is excellent historical evidence for Gillespie's authorship of *WS*. The source of the attribution of this work to Gillespie is his cousin, Rev. Patrick Simpson (1628-1715). Simpson was 19 or 20 when Gillespie died (1648). He evidently grew up with his cousin and/or cousin's children (see M'Crie's comment in *Wodrow's Correspondence*, volume 1, pp. 14). He was present when Gillespie was sick and dying. The historian, Robert Wodrow, knew Simpson, corresponded with him, and interviewed him and stayed with him for three days. From this interview we have Simpson's recounting of Gillespie's last illness and death and the statement that Wodrow says he has from Mr. Simpson's mouth that Gillespie was the author of *WS*. (see also Hetherington's *Memoir*, the appendix, in Gillespie's *Works*). Wodrow's personal assessment of the long lived Mr. Simpson, was that "I have now had long acquaintance of him, and never knew one more pleasant and profitable in conversation ... He had one of the clearest judgments, and yet the most exact and tenacious memories that I ever knew." So we have a usually reliable and accurate historian's interview of a man of unusually clear tenacious memory (for an octogenarian I suppose he means) attesting to these facts. And who better than a close friend and relative to know what Gillespie may have or may not have written, and who may well have collected and read all the material by his famous cousin? And why would he mention these works? Would it not be because they were published anonymously and he knew his cousin wrote them and wanted to attest to that fact? Wodrow termed Simpson one of the last "antediluvian" Presbyterians. He saw him as an important source of data, particularly I suppose given his relationship to Gillespie, one of the prime movers of the Second Reformation. Gillespie's authorship has been accepted by most of the historians I've seen who comment or make mention of *WS*. See Walker, *Theology and Theologians of Scotland*, Macpherson, *Doctrine of the Church in Scottish Theology*, Campbell, "George Gillespie" in the *Records of the Scottish Historical Society*, volume X, Part II. 1949.

Arguments from style and content are of little consequence by themselves, but they add a comfort level to the historical data outlined above. 1. In works all from 1645, we find use of similar sources. For example we find the use of the reformed theologian, Gualther in *WS*, House of Lords Sermon, and *Nibil Respondes*. *Grotti Apologeta* is cited in *WS* and *Brotherly Examination*. 2. There are similar themes or ideas among various works and *WS*. He speaks of Presbyterian Government being maligned in *Aaron's Rod* and *WS*, and uses the argument that the abuse of a thing is not an argument against the right use of it. Liberty of conscience is addressed in *WS* and some of the same ideas are covered in his House of Lords Sermon, where very similar language is also used (p. 12). 3. There are similar phraseologies. He uses Gallio to illustrate a favorite idea, the nullifidian, and the adiaphorist for one who views all things as things indifferent) in *WS*, *English Popish Ceremonies*, *Aaron's Rod Blossoming*.

Compare from *EPC* — "The atheistical nullifidian, nothing regards the assoiling of ecclesiastical controversies; he is of Gallio's humor (Acts 18:17), and cares for none of those things... The pragmatist adiaphorist ..." etc — and *Aaron's Rod* (similar use, nullifidian is not used) — "Let the Gallio's of this time (who care for no intrinical evil in the church)..." — with *WS* — "The first is when the Magistrate is a Nullifidian, Neutralist, and Adiaphorist, esteeming as Gallio did"

There is similar use of language in *EPC* and *WS*. In *WS* the author writes: "The thing being necessary, as has been said, it is *pars tutior*, yea, *tutissima* [it is the safer part, yea, the very safest], that a man is compelled to it ... though it is against his erring and ill informed conscience." In *EPC* Gillespie writes: "But if the error of conscience is about unnecessary things, or such as are in themselves indifferent, then it is *pars tutior* [the safer part], the surest and safest part not to urge men to do that which in their consciences they condemn" (Naphtali Press edition, p. 25).

It is interesting to note in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) that *EPC* is cited as a usage example of the term "nullifidian," and *Wholesome Severity* is cited as one for "adiaphorist." And for what it is worth, the OED attributes *WS* without controversy to George Gillespie in the list of works cited for usage.

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