PRINCIPLES
OF THE
Reformed Presbyterian Church
BY
REV. JAMES PATTON

PUBLISHED BY THE REQUEST OF COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC
EDUCATION APPOINTED BY COLORADO PRESBYTERY

"Put a little down and press about her, till it
became clay. Work as well as thou canst, and
cover her gashes." (Ps. 45:5)

CLAYTON
Plym. 5th of Day, 1837.
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"Write about Elias, and preach about love; tell the
story through. Many by evil live, beholders;
consider her patterns." (Jn. 3:16.)
PREFACE.

The object of these pages is to set forth in brief, simple and reasonable form the prominent principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, that the young people, new members and others interested in the beliefs of this Church may readily perceive what we believe and why.

"Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you."

"Let your light so shine before men."

JAMES PATTON.

EVANS, COLORADO,

November 6, 1854.

THE SCRIPTURES.

The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the word of God.

The Bible is the only book which contains a revelation from God.

The Bible is the only rule of faith and conduct.

The Bible is proven to be the word of God from—

1. Its subject-matter.
2. The harmony of its various parts.
3. Its purity.
4. Its adaptation to all men.
5. The fulfillment of its prophecies.
6. Its effects in the world.
7. Its wonderful preservation in all ages.

The Bible is the basis of the Church creed.

APOLLOPS' CREED.

The leading doctrines of the Bible are contained in what is called the Apostles' Creed, which all evangelical Christians accept.

"I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, and our Saviour; who was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell [i.e., the state of the dead, in which he continued until the third day]; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to..."
judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen."

PLAN OF SALVATION.

We believe that God's purpose to save men is through Jesus Christ alone, who appeared in our nature, obeyed the law, suffered the penalty of His people's sins upon the cross; and that all men are called on to believe in Him for salvation. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16.)

PRESCBYTERIANISM.

We are called Presbyterians because we adopt the presbyterian form of church government. We are called Reformed Presbyterians because we are the Presbyterian Church which existed at the time of the Second Reformation. Presbyterianism conforms to the scriptural mode of church government.

The church courts consist of—

1. The session, having the care of matters pertaining to the religious interests of a particular congregation.
   "They ordained them elders in every church." (Acts 14:23.)

2. The presbytery, to attend to matters of the congregations and other matters of religious interest within a certain district.
   "Laying on of the hands of the presbytery." (L Tim. 4:14.)

3. A Synod, or general assembly, composed of all the presbyteries, to attend to matters of religious interest to the whole Church.
   "They determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question." (Acts 15:2.)

   The officers consist of—
   1. Ordained ministers.
   2. Elders.
   3. Deacons.
   4. "Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business." (Acts 6:3.)

COVENANTING.

We are called Covenanters because we believe in publicly covenanted as a church. Every true individual Christian covenants with God. But the Church also should covenant. The Church of Israel covenanted with God.
"And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the Lord commanded him. And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken will we do, and Moses returned the words of the Lord unto the people." (Ex. 19:7, 8.)

Nations also should covenant with God. Israel as a nation covenanted. (II. Kings 23:3. II. Chron. 34:1, Jer. 4:2. Isa. 19:18.)

THE PSALMS.

The Psalms of the Bible alone should be sung in the worship of God.

1. The Psalms are God's songs—they are inspired.

2. As they are inspired by God, they are perfect songs.

"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." (Ps. 19:7.)

3. They were appointed by God to be sung in worship.

"Sing unto the Lord with the words of David and of Asaph the seer." (II. Chron. 35:30.)

4. This appointment has never been repealed.

5. The commandment to sing the Psalms is repeated in the New Testament through Paul. (Col. 3:16.)

6. No other songs are commanded to be sung.

7. We are to use nothing in the worship of God but what God has commanded. "What living waters I command you observe to do it; thou shalt not add thereto nor diminish from it." (Deut. 12:32.)

MUSIC.

Although instrumental music, like the offering up of incense, was connected with the worship of God in old Testament times, yet we have no account in New Testament history of its being continued. There is no renewed command to use it. But under this more spiritual dispensation the command is to offer "the fruit of our lips, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

SECRET SOCIETIES.

Oath-bound secret societies are evil institutions to be shunned by Christians.

MASONRY.

1. Its secrecy condemns it.

"And this is the condemnation, that light hath come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." (John 3:19-21.)

"I spake openly to the world, I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, wherein the Jews always meet: and in secret have I said nothing."—Jesus Christ.
"Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." (Eph. 5:11.)

2. It requires its candidates to take wicked oaths.

"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."—Third Commandment.

3. Its rites of initiation are degrading.

"It is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret." (Eph. 5:12.)

4. It is a false religion, with a divinity, worship, and promises of salvation, but rejecting Jesus Christ.

"No man can serve two masters." (Mat. 6:24.)

"Whoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the father." (I John 2:23.)

5. It binds together in a common brotherhood professing Christians and the vilest sinners.

"Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers, for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness, and what communion hath light with darkness?" (II. Cor. 6:14.)

6. It is founded on selfishness.

"Let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." (Eph. 6:10.)

7. It interferes with lawful government, and defeats justice.

"All secret, oath-bound parties are dangerous to any nation."—U. S. Unrat.

8. It conflicts with church and family duties.

9. It requires money that should be consecrated to Christ.

"Honor the Lord with thy substance." (Prov. 3:9.)

OTHER SECRET ORDERS:

Much of the above is true of all oath-bound secret societies.

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you." (2 Cor. 6:17.)

TEMPERANCE.

1. We should totally abstain from all intoxicating beverages.

"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright." (Prov. 23:31.)

2. We should demand the complete prohibition of the manufacture and sale of alcoholic liquors as beverage.

"Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink; that pouseth his bottle to him, and maketh him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness." (Hab. 2:15.)

The Reformed Presbyterian Synod of 1893 adopted the following:

"Synod reaffirms in most emphatic terms the position which we as a church occupy on this subject of temperance, viz: Prohibition by the state and total abstinence on the part of the individual.

* * * We reiterate our condemnation of the filthy habit of using tobacco as demoralizing the
character, ruining the health, and draining the income, as well as entailing disease and an enfeebled constitution upon posterity."

POLITICAL DISSENT.

It is a duty to dissent from what is evil in politics, as well as from what is evil elsewhere.

A Christian cannot consistently take office or vote in a nation whose constitution and laws are immoral when an oath of office is required to support that constitution and those laws. We must not swear immoral oaths.

In the United States, officers are commonly required to take an oath to support the constitution of the United States, and the constitution and laws of the State in which they hold office.

The constitution of the United States and certain of its laws are immoral, and therefore a Christian cannot consistently swear to support them.

I. THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION.

(1) God is not acknowledged as the author of civil government, but "we the people" are said to ordain the government. The voice of the people is taken instead of the voice of God.

"There is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God." (Rom. 13:1.)

"In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy path." (Prov. 3:6.)

(2) It ignores the Lord Jesus Christ, who is Ruler of nations, and by whom "princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth."

"The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ." (Rev. 11:15.)

The command to rulers and governments is, "Kiss the Son." (Ps. 2:12.)

(3) God's Word is not taken as the basis of law.

Article VI of the constitution says: "This constitution and the laws * * * made in pursuance thereof * * * shall be the supreme law of the land; and judges in every State shall be bound thereby."

"The Lord is our lawgiver." (Is. 33:22)

(4) One plain requirement of the Bible is contradicted. The Bible says, "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of the Lord." (II Sam. 22:3.) See also Ex. 18:21.

The constitution flatly contradicts this, and says: "No religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States."

He who swears to support this constitution swears to support what opposes God, rejects His Son, and contradicts His word. We who have covenanted with God must not covenant against Him.

II. IMMORAL LAWS.

Many of the States have wicked laws, such as infamous liquor laws and intolerable divorce laws. One who takes the oath of office in States where repugnant laws are required to support the liquor traffic, or one who takes the oath of office in States which...
have immoral divorce laws sworn to support these evil laws. A godless officer swears to support these things, and keeps his oath. A Christian swears to support them, and often breaks his oath. Moreover, he intends when he takes the oath to break it. This perjury he commits for the purpose of accomplishing a certain good. But we must not do evil that good may come. Some say: "Let us do evil that good may come; whose damnation is just." (Rom. 3:8.)

Those who vote for officers who are required to take an immoral oath are guilty of taking the oath themselves, on the principle that what one does by another he does himself. We should not elect another to do a thing which would be wrong to do ourselves.

A REGULAR LIFE AND CONVERSATION.

The Reformed Presbyterian Church endeavors to maintain a high standard of morality, and seeks to promote piety among its members. It is a Church that never tolerated a slave-holder in its communion; a Church of which every minister is decidedly in favor of the prohibition of the liquor traffic by law; a Church which demands Sabbath observance by the State as well as by the individual; a Church that has ever been in the lead in moral reforms; the only Church that refuses to swear to support the evils in civil government; a Church that endeavors to secure sobriety, righteousness, and godliness everywhere in this present world.