

Mr Dan Taylor's profession of faith, read and approved, at a special Church-meeting of the General Baptist Society, in Church-lane, Whitechapel

June 1st 1785*

1. I believe that the whole creation gives proofs of a Deity; and that man is capable of forming such reasonings and arguments from the evidence of wisdom and power presented to our view in the several objects that our eyes daily behold, as are sufficient to manifest the workmanship of One, who is infinitely superior to mere mortals. But, however evident this may be, and how certainly soever all nations of the world have experienced the truth of it,; yet the most sagacious mortal never was , nor ever will be, able to conceive of God, nor of those things which are necessary to give comfort and satisfaction, respecting future happiness or the way to enjoy that happiness, by the light of nature. Therefore, as far as we can judge, there is an apparent necessity of a fuller discovery of the mind of God to man than the light of nature, in order to understand how we can be accepted with him.
2. That the great God has therefore been pleased, at sundry times, and in divers manners, to make himself known and to reveal his will to man, by voices, visions, etc. by the ministry of the prophets and of his own Son; and afterwards by his apostles; and has given such evidence, by miracles, prophesies and otherwise, that they all received their mission from heaven, that there is no just reason to doubt of it.
3. That these instructions are since collected, by divine appointment, into one book, called the Bible, and preserved, by divine Providence, fo the illumination of a dark world, in spite of many efforts that have been made use of to destroy them.
4. That the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are given by inspiration of God, as a full and sufficient revelation of his will to mortals; and that we may learn from thence, whatever is needful to be known in order to enjoy present and everlasting felicity. That there is no other book in existence that can lay a just claim to divine inspiration besides the Scriptures. And that nothing is to be added to them by the invention or tradition of men, or from any opinion or authority whatever; and that nothing can with impunity

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be substituted in the stead of any part of them That we have no authority to expect nor can we with safety depend upon, any other revelation or suggestion whatever besides the scriptures: they are our only rule in every branch of practice and faith; and are sufficiently plain to every one who reads them with attention and is willing to follow them: so that all others are without excuse.

5. That the Scriptures give us a clear and sufficient account of the Blessed God, and teach us, that he is infinitely wise, powerful and holy; that he is eternal and immutable; that he knows all things; that he is good, kind and pitiful to all men, and is not willing that any should perish; that he is invariably faithful to all his promises and threatenings. That God is one; yet there are Three represented by the name of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, who have communion in the Godhead, and have proper Deity ascribed to them all. But I cannot find, that any man has yet learned from scripture to describe how these three are united in one Godhead; nor the exact modes of their distinction. Nor do I pretend to be able to give an exact account of this mystery – As I do not find them called in Scripture three Persons, I do not choose to call them so myself; but, I neither wish to condemn nor to contend with those who think it proper to use this manner of speech.
6. That the great God formed all things by his powerful word; and preserves, supports, supplies and controls the whole creation; and even overrules the wickedness of men and devils by the same power for his own glory and according to the counsel of his own will.
7. That the great God for his own praise and glory, formed and continually supports two classes of intelligent beings; i.e. Angels and Men; who are the principal subjects of his kingdom, and are under the most indispensable obligations to do his will, and consecrate themselves to serve his interest and promote his glory; and, that he justly demands this of them. That some of the Angels rebelled against him, and are consigned to everlasting woe, hopeless; while others continued in obedience and kept their first estate, and so continue happy in his presence. That these fallen angels, or one of these, by a stratagem led our first parents into rebellion against their Maker; and hereby this world of ours, which would otherwise have been a place of felicity, is become a region of iniquity, misery and death.
8. That, in consequence of this first sin, all mankind lost their primitive rectitude, and are all prone to rebel against God; and, when they come to understanding, do actually rebel against God, and are, in consequence of that rebellion, exposed to his wrath as the just punishment of it. That in consequence of this revolt from God and rebellion against him, mankind can never be happy, till their sins be pardoned and their hearts purified.
9. That the moral law requires all men to love God, with all their heart, with all their mind, with all their soul, and with all their strength, and to love their neighbour as themselves; and, that this is the test of right and wrong, and the only rule of every man's conduct. That all men are transgressors of it both in temper and in life, and are hereby exposed to condemnation; from which they cannot recover themselves by any duties they are capable of performing. Therefore, that salvation is not of works, but of free grace. That all that is done for us, or given to us, or wrought in us, or that we are able to do for him, is entirely of the free, rich and undeserved bounty of the great and blessed god; whom we have grievously offended by our iniquities, and who might justly consign us to punishment for them.

10. That God is loving, tender and compassionate, towards poor sinful man; and, in order to preserve his justice inviolate, to maintain the honour of his holy law, and the dignity and rectitude of his government, and yet to make condemned sinners everlastingly happy, he has brought in a new covenant; in which he has given his dear Son to be man's surety, to take our nature and place under the law which we have broken, and by which we are justly condemned, and to suffer for our sins. So that now, in perfect consistency with law and justice, with honour to his government, and all his glorious perfections, he can and does treat with mankind on a new foundation, in a way of free grace; and can now be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.
11. I believe, that, in our stead, Jesus has, by dying for us, made reconciliation for our iniquities, brought in everlasting righteousness, and provided a complete and free salvation for miserable sinners, and for all sinners without exception.
12. That this glorious salvation, with all the various blessings contained in it, is plainly revealed in scripture, and proclaimed to the world in the gospel, accompanied with such invitations and promises, directions and threatenings, as are directly calculated to answer the purpose and suit the circumstances of fallen men; to allure and incline the will as a rational appetite, and to beget the fallen soul anew, and bring it home to God; to dispose it to the practice of holiness, and conduct it to the possession of real, present, and everlasting felicity.
13. That repentance, regeneration and holiness in heart and life, are absolutely necessary in order to prepare the soul for salvation and eternal glory. But that faith in Christ and that only, or the believing of the gospel, entitles poor sinful mortals to every part of happiness.
14. That the Holy Spirit, by the instrumentality of the word which exhibits the free salvation of Christ, works on the minds of sinners to bring them to God; and to the enjoyment of salvation by Jesus Christ: that the word accomplishes this blessed purpose whenever it takes place and is cordially received: and that pardon, righteousness, comfort, strength, and every other spiritual blessing are in this way, communicated to man.
15. As God now treats with men on this new foundation, both reason and scripture show, that, though man is exposed to condemnation as a transgressor of the law, yet the condemnatory sentence is not executed upon any man, where the word is enjoyed for breaking the law only, but for neglecting and rejecting the gospel and the salvation exhibited to us in it. In other words, men are now condemned and consigned finally to endless misery because they receive not the love of the truth that they might be saved.
16. That God has chosen or appointed from the beginning, that believers should be saved, and that unbelievers should be damned. Hence in the New Testament, believers are called Elect; the unbelievers, Reprobate. These are not chosen because they are holy, but that they may be holy. The scripture does not say, that they are chosen *to* faith, but *through* sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. As God foreknew all things, therefore this choice was made according to his knowledge: and, this is what I understand by the election of his grace.

17. That true believers receive the Spirit by faith; by which they are regenerated or renewed; and hereby, not only are constituted the heirs of God; but, in a measure, made comfortable to him in their minds; and so are from that time meet for glory. Yet they ought to grow in grace; and, by activity in all holiness, to be laying up treasure in heaven, when they shall, of free grace, be rewarded according to their works.
18. I believe that the saints ought to be subject to civil magistrates, according to the constitution and laws by which they are governed in all civil matters; that in matters of religion, they are to pay regard to none but Christ.
19. That a gospel church is a community of faithful persons, who are voluntarily united in Christian love, to support their Redeemer's interest on earth, and make it their great concern to proceed according to the best of their capacity, according to the rule of the New Testament, and these rules only: rejecting opinions and traditions of men, and harkening diligently to the voice of their great Master who is in heaven.
20. That Jesus, our great Saviour and Master, has appointed two special ordinances, or positive institutions, to be observed in his church. These are Baptism and the Lord's supper; the former to be performed only once; but the latter as often as can be made convenient: and both are to be continued in church to the end of time.
21. That Baptism is designed to be a standing memorial and emblematic representation of the burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and of our recovery from a death in sin in a spiritual and holy life by him; and also to denote our surrendering of ourselves up entirely to his service. That the only scriptural way of administering this ordinance, is to immerse the person in water: and the only scriptural subjects are those that repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.
22. That the Lord's supper is a solemn eating of bread and drinking of wine together, as a memorial or emblematic representation of our blessed Saviour's sufferings for our sins, and the refreshment and spiritual nourishment that his sufferings administer to the souls of true believers; and that believers only are the scriptural subjects of it.
23. That there is a time approaching known only to God, when all the dead shall arise from their graves, and shall stand before the Lord Jesus Christ, who is appointed by the Father to judge the world in righteousness; and will be seated on a glorious throne for that purpose. That the judgement and the rewards or punishments consequent on it, will be according to our works: that those who died in a state of sin and neglect of God will be sent to everlasting punishment; but the righteous received to life eternal. That every man will be judged, and rewarded or punished according to the dispensation he has lived under, and that revelation of the will of God that with which he has been favoured on earth. Those who have sinned without law must perish without law; those who have sinned in, or under the law, must be judged by the law; and all those who have had the use of the New Testament will be judged according to the gospel. That the wicked, under every dispensation, will be punished in proportion to their wickedness; and the righteous rewarded according to their righteousness.
24. That when this awful and tremendous scene shall be closed, the two grand classes of mankind, the wicked and the righteous shall be sent to their own places, in which they

shall eternally remain. The wicked must be everlastingly tormented with the devil and his angels, as they have in the world imitated them in sinning against the God of heaven and earth; and must for ever groan beneath the vengeance of that God against whom they have rebelled: while the righteous shall be eternally happy in the kingdom of the Father and Saviour. For they are then made kings and priests unto God, and shall reign with him for ever.

References

Taylor, A. (1818). *The history of the English General Baptists: Part 2, The New Connection of General Baptists*. London: Adam Taylor.