

STILL PROTESTING

In Honor of the 500th Anniversary of the Protestant
Reformation

And in the spirit of Luther, who nailed his theses to the
Wittenberg church door



Dear Roman Catholic friends,

While I am inspired by the nailing of the 95 Theses by Luther upon the church at Wittenberg, I am not in full doctrinal agreement with Luther's theological assessment as written in those theses (and in fact, he would continue his reforming, distancing him even further from the idolatries of the papacy).

So then, instead of nailing the 95 Theses to your door in the spirit of festivities for this the 500th Anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, I am nailing to your door the 26th chapter of my own Confession of Faith, the Second London Baptist Confession (1689).

While I pray you take my nailing of this to your door as a cheerful, non-threatening expression of my Protestant faith in light of this religious season of Reformation, I also pray that you repent of your gross idolatries, the blasphemous mass, the notion of an earthly priesthood, your detestable necromancy, and all the remnants of your priest-craft. Most of all, I pray that you trust in a salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.

I have used the smallest nail possible, so as to not damage your door. I would rather the Sola Fide Gospel pierce your soul than that my nail splinter your door. Should you find it necessary to charge me with some kind of vandalism for this endeavor, I will happily admit to exercising my religion, which duty-bounds me to protest the Pope of Rome.

Sincerely Still Protesting,

On Protesting the Anti-Christ of Rome, and the True Church of Jesus Christ.

Chapter 26: Of the Church

1. The catholic or universal church, which (with respect to the internal work of the Spirit and truth of grace) may be called invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ, the head thereof; and is the spouse, the body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

(Hebrews 12:23; Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 1:10, 22, 23; Ephesians 5:23, 27, 32)

2. All persons throughout the world, professing the faith of the gospel, and obedience unto God by Christ according unto it, not destroying their own profession by any errors everting the foundation, or unholiness of conversation, are and may be called visible saints; and of such ought all particular congregations to be constituted.

(1 Corinthians 1:2; Acts 11:26; Romans 1:7; Ephesians 1:20-22)

3. The purest churches under heaven are subject to mixture and error; and some have so degenerated as to become no churches of Christ, but synagogues of Satan; nevertheless Christ always hath had, and ever shall have a kingdom in this world, to the end thereof, of such as believe in him, and make profession of his name.

(1 Corinthians 5; Revelation 2; Revelation 3; Revelation 18:2; 2 Thessalonians 2:11, 12; Matthew 16:18; Psalms 72:17; Psalm 102:28; Revelation 12:17)

4. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of the church, in whom, by the appointment of the Father, all power for the calling, institution, order or government of the church, is invested in a supreme and sovereign manner; **neither can the Pope of Rome in any sense be head thereof, but is that antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the church against Christ, and all**

that is called God; whom the Lord shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.

(Colossians 1:18; Matthew 28:18-20; Ephesians 4:11, 12; 2 Thessalonians 2:2-9)

5. In the execution of this power wherewith he is so intrusted, the Lord Jesus calleth out of the world unto himself, through the ministry of his word, by his Spirit, those that are given unto him by his Father, that they may walk before him in all the ways of obedience, which he prescribeth to them in his word. Those thus called, he commandeth to walk together in particular societies, or churches, for their mutual edification, and the due performance of that public worship, which he requireth of them in the world.

(John 10:16; John 12:32; Matthew 28:20; Matthew 18:15-20)

6. The members of these churches are saints by calling, visibly manifesting and evidencing (in and by their profession and walking) their obedience unto that call of Christ; and do willingly consent to walk together, according to the appointment of Christ; giving up themselves to the Lord, and one to another, by the will of God, in professed subjection to the ordinances of the Gospel.

(Romans. 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Acts 2:41, 42; Acts 5:13, 14; 2 Corinthians 9:13)

7. To each of these churches thus gathered, according to his mind declared in his word, he hath given all that power and authority, which is in any way needful for their carrying on that order in worship and discipline, which he hath instituted for them to observe; with commands and rules for the due and right exerting, and executing of that power.

(Matthew 18:17, 18; 1 Corinthians 5:4, 5; 1 Corinthians 5:13; 2 Corinthians 2:6-8)

8. A particular church, gathered and completely organized according to the mind of Christ, consists of officers and members; and the officers appointed by Christ to be chosen and set apart by the church (so called and gathered), for the

peculiar administration of ordinances, and execution of power or duty, which he intrusts them with, or calls them to, to be continued to the end of the world, are bishops or elders, and deacons.

(Acts 20:17, 28; Philippians 1:1)

9. The way appointed by Christ for the calling of any person, fitted and gifted by the Holy Spirit, unto the office of bishop or elder in a church, is, that he be chosen thereunto by the common suffrage of the church itself; and solemnly set apart by fasting and prayer, with imposition of hands of the eldership of the church, if there be any before constituted therein; and of a deacon that he be chosen by the like suffrage, and set apart by prayer, and the like imposition of hands.

(Acts 14:23; 1 Timothy 4:14; Acts 6:3, 5, 6)

10. The work of pastors being constantly to attend the service of Christ, in his churches, in the ministry of the word and prayer, with watching for their souls, as they that must give an account to Him; it is incumbent on the churches to whom they minister, not only to give them all due respect, but also to communicate to them of all their good things according to their ability, so as they may have a comfortable supply, without being themselves entangled in secular affairs; and may also be capable of exercising hospitality towards others; and this is required by the law of nature, and by the express order of our Lord Jesus, who hath ordained that they that preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel.

(Acts 6:4; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Timothy 5:17, 18; Galatians 6:6, 7; 2 Timothy 2:4; 1 Timothy 3:2; 1 Corinthians 9:6-14)

11. Although it be incumbent on the bishops or pastors of the churches, to be instant in preaching the word, by way of office, yet the work of preaching the word is not so peculiarly confined to them but that others also gifted and fitted by the Holy Spirit for it, and approved and called by the church, may and ought to perform it.

(Acts 11:19-21; 1 Peter 4:10, 11)

12. As all believers are bound to join themselves to particular churches, when and where they have opportunity so to do; so all that are admitted unto the privileges of a church, are also under the censures and government thereof, according to the rule of Christ.

(1 Thessalonians 5:14; 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14, 15)

13. No church members, upon any offence taken by them, having performed their duty required of them towards the person they are offended at, ought to disturb any church-order, or absent themselves from the assemblies of the church, or administration of any ordinances, upon the account of such offence at any of their fellow members, but to wait upon Christ, in the further proceeding of the church.

(Matthew 18:15-17; Ephesians 4:2, 3)

14. As each church, and all the members of it, are bound to pray continually for the good and prosperity of all the churches of Christ, in all places, and upon all occasions to further every one within the bounds of their places and callings, in the exercise of their gifts and graces, so the churches, when planted by the providence of God, so as they may enjoy opportunity and advantage for it, ought to hold communion among themselves, for their peace, increase of love, and mutual edification.

(Ephesians 6:18; Psalms 122:6; Romans 16:1, 2; 3 John 8-10)

15. In cases of difficulties or differences, either in point of doctrine or administration, wherein either the churches in general are concerned, or any one church, in their peace, union, and edification; or any member or members of any church are injured, in or by any proceedings in censures not agreeable to truth and order: it is according to the mind of Christ, that many churches holding communion together, do, by their messengers, meet to consider, and give their advice in or about that matter in difference, to be reported to all the churches concerned; howbeit these messengers assembled, are not intrusted with any church-power properly so called; or

with any jurisdiction over the churches themselves, to exercise any censures either over any churches or persons; or to impose their determination on the churches or officers.

(Acts 15:2, 4, 6, 22, 23, 25; 2 Corinthians 1:24; 1 John 4:1)