

**“Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God. But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them...For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” (2 Cor. 4:1-6.)**

And God did – as a matter of fact – issue a series of commandments regulating light and darkness as His first creative acts; to wit:

***“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.” (Gen. 1:1-5)***

Thus you see, Beloved, what a beautiful metaphor the figure of speech “**LIGHT**” is referring to the relationship between Christ and His elect people. There we were in total darkness (even darkness that could be “*felt*” to wit: “*And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt. And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven; and there was a THICK DARKNESS in all the land of Egypt three days: they saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days; but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.*” (Ex. 10:21-23.)

There we were in thick darkness and felt darkness, and God saw the light that it was good; but darkness was upon the face of the deep, without form and void. What a dismal condition, without hope and without God in the world – except for the likes of John chapter one, and First John chapter one; to wit:

***“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.” (Jn. 1:1-10)***

Walking in darkness is the antithesis of walking in the light; and, Walking in darkness also means living a life of deliberate, spiritual, Bible ignorance; to wit:

***"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that GOD IS LIGHT, AND IN HIM IS NO DARKNESS AT ALL. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth; But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."***

**(1 Jn. 1:1-7)**

Beloved, upon one occasion the disciples came and put a vital question to the Savior, and received a searching answer; to wit: *"Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the MYSTERIES OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, BUT TO THEM IT IS NOT GIVEN."* (Mat. 13:10,11.) Put another way, and with more amazing revelations, which almost nobody accepts or believes; to wit:

***"And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable. And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto THEM THAT ARE WITHOUT, all these things are done in parables: That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them."*** (Mk. 4:10-12)

*"Them that are without,"* clearly, are the non-Elect; those of the Adamic race who are predestinated from the foundation of the world to rebel against the King in this life, to die eventually, thereafter to spend eternity in Hell. This is the great, overwhelming majority of the human race. The Lord Jesus, while here upon earth, spent most of His time disputing with *"them that are without,"* the non-Elect. He told them repeatedly that His purpose was absolutely not to make things easy for them to understand, and for them to be converted and so that their sins could be forgiven. And on this occasion, He added in what was apparent exasperation that, *"Know ye not this parable? And how then will ye know all parables?"* (in other words, the Savior blasts the reprobate rebel for being stubborn and insincere and hypocritical). (Mk. 4:13.) To which, Dr. Luke adds:

***"And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be? And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand."***  
**(Lk. 8:9,10)**

This is the heart of the Gospel, the 5-Points of Calvinism, and the London, and early American Confessions of Faith (for example, The Philadelphia Confession of Faith). When Hansard Knollys became public in his defenses of the Baptists, about 1645 or 1646, he justified the origin of the Baptists in London to Dr. Bastwick in much the same manner as Mr. Kiffen did, by the means of ministers who came into London from the dispersed and scattered churches which had been meeting in the countryside. Like the 5-mile law that kept John Bunyan in jail 12 years (writing his famous Pilgrim's Progress). Baptist preachers preaching in the open air in the countryside – at least 5 miles from any town or village. Sound familiar?

These country preachers demonstrated their prowess as preachers and theologians – like Bunyan and his humble brethren contributing to the forming of Confessions of Faith. One priest of the Church of England said: *"When we consider these original writings and their sources, then we conclude these old brethren were not the idiots and scatterbrains some have imagined. In fact, my conclusion is, after over twenty years of studying them, they represent the finest group of New Testament defenders and maintainers of the faith, order, worship and work of Jesus Christ, of any era, I have read, since the days of the Apostles and the Inspired Scriptures. When these Particular Baptist writers are considered with the apostolic Fathers, even the entire scope of Anti-Nicene, Nicene, or Post-Nicene writers, they will be viewed as vastly superior in every department. This may be true also for any other time period in church history or historical theology. After years of studying a collection of the Baptist writers since the 1600s, we can also suggest that we have found no writer or group of writers who can come close to those who issued The First London Confession of Faith."* See, for example, The Philadelphia Confession of Faith; to-wit:

*"Of God's Decree. God hath decreed in himself, from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably, ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER comes to pass; yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin nor hath fellowship with any therein; nor is violence offered to the will of the creature, nor yet is the liberty nor contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established; in which appears his wisdom in disposing all things, and power and faithfulness in accomplishing his decree. The following ten passages prove the point: (Isa. 46:8-10; **"Remember this, and shew yourselves men: bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors. Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."**); (Eph. 1:4-6; **"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."**); (Heb. 6:17-20; **"Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."**); (Rom. 9:13-18; **"As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth."**); (Jas. 1:12-16; **"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted,***

*when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Do not err, my beloved brethren.”); (1 Jn. 1:5: “This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.”); (Acts 4:26-29: “The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy Holy Child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. And now, Lord, behold their threatening: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word.”); (Jn. 19:10,11: "Then said Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.”); (Num. 23:19-21: "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? Behold, I have received commandment to bless: and he hath blessed; and I cannot reverse it. He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel: the Lord his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them.”); (Eph. 1:17: "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.”)"*

The Philadelphia Confession of Faith is identical to the Second London Confession of Faith (1689). This confession was first issued by the Philadelphia Association in 1742, the heart of which follows:

*"By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestinated, or foreordained, to eternal life through Jesus Christ, to the praise of his glorious grace; others being left to act in their sin to their just condemnation, to the praise of his glorious justice. These angels and men thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished. Those of mankind that are predestinated to life, by God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of his will, hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory, out of his mere, free grace and love, without any other thing in the creature as a condition or cause moving him thereunto. As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so he hath, by the eternal and most free purpose of his will, foreordained all the means thereunto, wherefore they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, are effectually called unto faith in Christ, by his Spirit working in due season, are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by his power through faith unto salvation, neither are any other redeemed by Christ, or effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only. The doctrine of the high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care, that men attending the will of God revealed in his Word, and yielding obedience thereunto, may, from the certainty of their effectual vocation, be assured of their eternal election; so shall this doctrine afford matter of praise, reverence, and admiration of God, and of humility, diligence, and abundant consolation to all that sincerely obey the gospel."*

I love you. Amen.