

The Scots' Confession (1560)

The Scots' Confession was written in 1560 at the direction of the Scottish parliament. Bitter struggle had erupted between the supporters of the Roman Catholic Church led by the Queen Regent Mary of Guise and those who embraced the Reformation and opposed Catholicism, which is derogatorily referred to as Papism. Mary had adamantly opposed all attempts at reformation of the church in Scotland. When Mary died in 1560, Protestant leaders petitioned the Scottish parliament to take action. John Knox, the leader of the Reformation in Scotland, and five other ministers drew up the Scots' Confession in four days, which was promptly ratified by the Parliament.

Chapter 1 – God

Chapter 2 – The Creation of Man

Chapter 3 – Original Sin

Chapter 4 – The Revelation of the Promise

Chapter 5 – The Continuance, Increase, and Preservation of the Kirk

Chapter 6 – The Incarnation of Jesus Christ

Chapter 7 – Why the Mediator Had to Be True God and True Man

Chapter 8 – Election

That same eternal God and Father, who by mere grace chose us in his Son Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world was laid, appointed him to be our head, our brother, our pastor, and the great bishop of our souls. But since the opposition between the justice of God and our sins was such that no flesh by itself could or might have attained unto God, it behooved the Son of God to descend unto us and take himself a body of our body, flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone, and so become the perfect Mediator between God and man, giving power to as many as believe in him to be the sons of God; as he himself says, "I ascend to my Father and to your Father, to my God and to your God." By this most holy brotherhood whatever we have lost in Adam is restored to us again. Therefore we are not afraid to call God our Father, not so much because he has created us, which we have in common with the reprobate, as because he has given unto us his only Son to be our brother, and given us grace to acknowledge and embrace him as our only Mediator, as is already said.

Further, it behooved the Messiah and Redeemer to be very God and very man, because he was able to undergo the punishment due for our transgressions and to present himself in the presence of his Father's judgments, as in our stead, to suffer for our transgression and disobedience, and by death to overcome him that was the author of death. But because the only Godhead could not suffer death, and neither could manhood overcome death, he joined both together in one person, that the weakness of one should suffer and be subject to death-- which we had deserved--and the infinite and invincible power of the other, that is, of the Godhead, should triumph, and purchase for us life, liberty, and perpetual victory. So we confess, and most undoubtedly believe.