



# The Church Covenant

## Sabden Baptist Church, 1798

A church is a number of visible professors called to be saints or at least denominated and by a judgement of charity, esteemed to be saints, who have been baptized by immersion in water upon an open profession of repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, united together by mutual consent in order to their having communion with one another and testifying their subjection to Christ and expectation of His presence in all His Ordinances, designing hereby to glorify His name, propagate His Gospel and interest in the work, and to promote their mutual edification in that holy faith which is founded on Scripture revelation and in order to which they are obliged to call and set over them. Pastor and Deacons, as persons qualified for that service to be helpers of their faith and to endeavour the independence of the Church of Christ, believing that the Church of Christ is not National, Parochial, Diocesan, Synodical but Congregational.

In obedience to the command of God, and in conformity to the example of Our Lord Jesus Christ and His faithful followers recorded in the New Testament, upon profession of repentance toward God and faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ, baptized in water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost: being now met together, we agree to make a fresh surrender of ourselves unto the Lord with deep humiliation for our past sins and earnest supplication to him for pardoning mercy and quickening grace; and as a proper means to awaken our souls to a lively sense of duty, and to revive the languishing work of religion among us; having through grace first given ourselves to the Lord, we have agreed this day (to renew our former engagement) in the most solemn manner, to give up ourselves, one to another, and so to say with our hearts, we are the Lord's, and to subscribe with our own hands in the following manner:-

We this day avouch the ever-blessed Jehovah, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the only true and living God for our covenant God, and all sufficient portion: and give up ourselves to be his alone in a perpetual covenant never-to-be-forgotten: we receive and submit to the Lord Jesus Christ as our only Saviour, Prophet, Priest and King, in whom we trust for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and complete redemption; we devote and give up ourselves as living Temples of the Holy Ghost, our sanctifier, guide, and comforter; whose gracious operations and heavenly conduct we desire more to feel and follow.

We take the holy scripture of the Old and New Testament as the only rule of our faith and practice, desiring in all things to be conformed to the whole will of God therein revealed, according to the tenor whereof, we now promise each for ourselves and jointly together (through Grace) to worship God in spirit and in truth; to observe His commandments and keep His ordinances as He delivered to us; to be subject to the divine order and discipline which Jesus Christ Our Lord and Lawgiver hath commanded in his Church; and not forsake the assembling of

ourselves together for the worship of God in its appointed and occasional seasons; but to continue in our relation one to another and fill up our place in the House of God and maintain his worship therein to the best of our capacities, till Death or evident calls of Divine providence shall separate us one from another; to love one another with pure hearts fervently; and to endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace for the honour of God and our mutual good unto edification: to watch over one another, to have our minds open to instruction and to bear reproof when necessary.

Through Grace, our design is to walk before God, in the world and in our houses, with sincere hearts and uphold the worship of God therein, to the best of our capabilities, by reading the holy scripture and prayer to God, that his word may dwell in us richly; and as we have given our children unto the Lord, so we will keep them, setting before them an example worthy of their imitation, and continue in prayer for their conversion and salvation.

Will also through Grace, endeavour to keep ourselves clear from the sins of the time and place where we dwell; and so to be holy in all manner of conversation, that none may have occasion given by our holy lives, to speak evil of the good ways of God: and all this under an abiding sense, that shortly we must give up our account to him that is ready to judge the quick and dead.

Unto which solemn engagement we set our hands in the presence of the all-seeing, heart-searching, rein-trying God, the 20th February, 1798`.