



The Scots Confession

John Knox

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John Knox (c. 1514 – 24 November 1572) was a Scottish clergyman and a leader of the Protestant Reformation who brought reformation to the church in Scotland. He was educated at the University of St Andrews and was ordained to the Roman Catholic priesthood in 1536. Influenced by early church reformers such as George Wishart, he joined the movement to reform the Scottish church. He was caught up in the ecclesiastical and political events that involved the murder of Cardinal Beaton in 1546 and the intervention of the regent of Scotland, Mary of Guise. He was taken prisoner by French forces the following year and exiled to England on his release in 1549. On his return to Scotland, he led the Protestant Reformation in Scotland, in partnership with the Scottish Protestant nobility. The movement may be seen as a revolution, since it led to the ousting of Mary of Guise, who governed the country in the name of her young daughter, Mary, Queen of Scots. Knox helped write the new confession of faith and the ecclesiastical order for the newly created reformed church, the Kirk. He continued to serve as the religious leader of the Protestants throughout Mary's reign. In several interviews with the queen, Knox admonished her for supporting Catholic practices. Eventually, when she was imprisoned for her alleged role in the murder of her husband, Lord Darnley, and James VI enthroned in her stead, he openly called for her execution. He continued to preach until his final days. The Scots Confession (also called the Scots Confession of 1560) is a Confession of Faith written in 1560 by six leaders of the Protestant Reformation in Scotland. The Confession was the first Subordinate Standard for the Protestant church in Scotland. In August 1560 the Parliament of Scotland agreed to reform the religion of the country. To enable them to decide what the Reformed Faith was to be, they set John Knox, and another 5 Johns, John Winram, John Spottiswoode, John Willock, John Douglas, and John Row, to prepare a Confession of Faith. This they did in 4 days. The 25 Chapters of the Confession spell out a contemporary statement of the Christian Faith as understood by the followers of John Calvin during his lifetime. Although the Confession and its accompanying documents were the product of the joint effort of the Six Johns, its authorship is customarily attributed to John Knox.

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