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Power-sharing with murderers — right or wrong?



Dr. Paisley and Gerry Adams at the press conference where the agreement to power-share was announced. Gerry Adams wore an Easter lily in remembrance of the Easter rebellion in Dublin in 1916. Sinn Fein is not in the business of forgetting murder and terror!

The position of the General Presbytery of the Free Presbyterian church on power-sharing with murderers is clear and unequivocal. It is not the present position adopted by its Moderator, Dr. Ian R K Paisley MP.

His agreeing to lead his Democratic Unionist Party into a power-sharing coalition with Sinn Fein/IRA is quite contrary to the political position he espoused just a very short time ago. However, given the propensity of politicians to change their minds and their manifestos, what is far more important is the fact that it is quite contrary to the position he and the Free Presbyterian Church have proclaimed as the teaching of the Word of God.

On 28th February, 1988, the 350th Anniversary of the Signing of the National Covenant of Scotland, the General Presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster held a solemn Sabbath of remembrance and of entering into a Covenant with God. That Covenant read:

The Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster Covenant **Our Object ***** A Testimony**

“As God providentially raised up Elijah, we believe He is now calling out a faithful remnant to maintain a testimony, free from compromise against every opposition of the enemy. As a separated Church of God, sinners saved by grace and born again of the Holy Spirit, conscious of the violation of God’s commandments so rampant in this evil age, and conscious also that we could have a name to live and be dead, we humble ourselves before God and solemnly covenant together, by His grace, to stand with Christ in this evil day, *for all that He is for, and against all that He is against.*

As worshippers of the one God of heaven and earth, in the Trinity of His sacred persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, to Whom be all honour and glory for ever, Amen.

As a Witness to the whole Word of God, the Bible, in its sixty-six books, verbally inspired by God the Holy Ghost, as the final authority of all matters of Doctrine, Faith and Practice — the infallible Word of God to man.

As a Witness to the Infallibility of the Person and Word of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who was God — God manifest in the flesh by the Virgin Birth, and essentially not only Son of God



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

but God the Son.

To maintain a Testimony to the Glory and Honour of the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ in His three mediatorial offices, Prophet, Priest and King. He alone is the sole King and only head of the Church.

To maintain a Testimony to the Crown Rights of Jesus Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords, the Prince of the kings of this earth and Governor among the nations.

To maintain a Testimony to the Gospel of the Free Grace of Almighty God and the Power of the Precious Blood of the Lamb, in a day of apostasy, declension and compromise.

To maintain a Testimony to the truth of Christ against the Roman anti-Christ, the supernaturalism of Christianity against the anti-supernaturalism of modernism so-called, the divine unity of the Church against the delusive uniformity of the ecumenical movement headed up in the World Council of Churches, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit's infilling against the deceptions of charismatic fanaticism and the fervour of true Christian zeal against the formality of dead and defunct orthodoxy.

'We preach Christ Crucified,' His Virgin Birth, His Virtuous Life, His Vicarious Death, His Victorious Resurrection, His Vivid Ascension, His Vitalising Intercession and His Visible Appearing.

These blessings and this complete victory of our adorable Lord are secured and sealed to us by the precious blood of the eternal Covenant. Heb 13:20-21.

'Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints,' Jude 3.

'Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand,' Ephesians 6:13."

A copy of the above Covenant, signed by those worshippers present at the services of Lord's Day February 28th, hangs as a silent witness in the church buildings of most of our congregations to the solemn oath Free Presbyterians took to **'stand with Christ in this evil day, for all that He is for, and against all that He is against.'**

On May 20th, 1998, the General Presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster was associated with an advert in the local press, calling on all to say NO" in the referendum on the Good Friday Agreement. It was signed by most if not all of the then ministers of the Free Presbyterian church.

The wording of the advert makes timely reading in the light of the recent agreement between the DUP and Sinn Fein/IRA in which they both committed themselves to the establishing of a coalition government in Northern Ireland.

Included in the advert was a statement from the Presbytery, part of which reads:

"The Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster recognising the Bible as our sole rule of faith and practice — vehemently opposes the recent April Agreement (the Good Friday Agreement).

Our opposition to the Agreement stems from the fact that it is unscriptural, unethical and immoral.

Another part of that 1998 advert reads: "We the undersigned, having professed faith in Christ as our Lord and Saviour and bound in conscience by the infallibility of the Word of God, declare the truth that governments have divinely been given the power of the sword



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for the punishment of evil doers, and the power of protection for the praise of them that do well.

The Agreement flies in the face of Holy Scripture and punishes those that do well and praises those that are evil doers.

We protest against this outrage."

'For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil,' Romans 13:3-4."

The advert ended with a call:

"The above individuals are all Protestant ministers, office bearers or church workers convinced of the immoral and anti-biblical nature of 'The Agreement'. On May 22nd we believe it is right to vote: 'NO'."

Dr. Ian Paisley was the prime mover in getting the Free Presbyterian Church to agree to the 1988 Solemn Covenant and the placing of the Presbytery statement in the 1998 advertisement which called for the rejection of power-sharing with murderers, and, to his honour, the chief author of both documents.

The Agreement of St Andrews and the Good Friday Agreement have at their heart the unscriptural principle of placing unrepentant murderers in government. The quotation from Romans 13:3-4 declares God's view of murderers in government.

On this basis alone this new agreement demands the same rejection of every Christian as did the 1998 agreement.

Dr. Paisley, along with those ministers and elders who vainly try to justify the Moderator's present position, is acting in defiance of the central principle of the 1988 Covenant which declared that we would "stand with Christ in this evil day, for all that He is for, and against all that He is against" and the central declaration of the 1998 Presbytery pronouncement that power-sharing with murderers is "unscriptural, unethical and immoral."

No good can come of this changed allegiance and this going back on solemn undertakings and declarations. That will become abundantly clear if the present coalition with Sinn Fein/IRA is persisted in by the DUP and its leadership.

More importantly, the Free Presbyterian Church, if it finally decides that it is going to go along with such compromise, will pay the price that God's people have ever paid for backsliding and disobedience.

As a denomination, we are in danger of turning from God and His paths. If we do that we, and above all our children, will reap a most terrible harvest.

"For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

waters, *and* hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water," Jeremiah 2:13.

"But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me. So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: *and* they walked in their own counsels. Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, *and* Israel had walked in my ways! I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries. The haters of the LORD should have submitted themselves unto him: but their time should have endured for ever. He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat: and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee," Psalm 81:11-16.

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land," 2 Chronicles 7:14.

Ivan Foster, April 2nd 2007.