

An
APOLOGY
of The Church of England

John Jewel
Resurrection Publishing

AN APOLOGY OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

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Member Edition sample · Resurrection Publishing

This free excerpt includes the Note on the Text and one chapter. It is not the full book.

NOTE ON THE TEXT

Primary witness

The text of this Member Edition follows a single copy-text: Lady Anne Bacon's English of John Jewel's *Apology of the Church of England*, as printed in William Edward Jelf, ed., *The Apology of the Church of England* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, **1849**), Parts I–VI and Recapitulation.

Page-image authority for accept is the Internet Archive scan a588502700jeweuf. Stage 3 proof for this Theme 2 title used AI image-collation against that authority (zero-defect bar; see edition design 2026-07-24). A Gutenberg Morley/Cassell 1888 Bacon-line transcription served as working draft only and was collated to Jelf.

Scope

This edition prints the Bacon-line *Apology*, **Parts I–VI and Recapitulation**, complete. Jelf's footnotes are retained as chapter-end notes with superscript callouts in the body (house pattern). It does **not** include Jelf's 1849 Preface, the later *Defence of the Apology*, or copyrighted modern editions (for example Booty 1963) as copy-text.

The volume is the **Protestant** voice in Resurrection Publishing's Theme "Scripture and unity."

Spelling and punctuation

Bacon/Jelf period diction is retained except where clear transcription garble was corrected against the page images. Residual early-modern *-ck* spellings (*catholick*, *bishopprick*) are regularized to modern *-c* (*cathol-*

ic, bishopric) for consistency with the copy-text's dominant forms. Otherwise British and period diction are kept (*defence, honour, bath, doth, saith*, and the like). Line-end hyphenation from the print is rejoined. Punctuation is lightly regularized for readability—quotation marks, dashes, and possessive apostrophes—without paraphrase.

Retained vocabulary

Jewel's theological diction is retained (*catholic, church, gospel, antiquity*, and related terms). No modernizing rewrite of Jewel's anti-Roman argument.

Scripture references

Scripture references are normalized to a consistent citation form (for example *John 21:15*), while preserving Bacon/Jelf quotation wording. Quotations are not silently replaced with any modern Bible version. Scholarly volume/page locators in Jelf's notes are not treated as Bible citations. Jelf's footnote citations appear with the chapter notes.

Version identification

This publication is jewel - apology - rp - 2026 . 1.

PART I

AN APOLOGY, OR ANSWER, IN DEFENCE OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, WITH A BRIEF AND PLAIN DECLARATION OF THE TRUE RELIGION PROFESSED AND USED IN THE SAME.

It hath been an old complaint, even from the first time of the patriarchs and prophets, and confirmed by the writings and testimonies of every age, that the truth wandereth here and there as a stranger in the world, and doth readily find enemies and slanderers amongst those that know her not.¹ Albeit perchance this may seem unto some a thing hard to be believed, I mean to such as have scant well and narrowly taken heed thereunto, specially seeing all mankind of nature's very motion without a teacher doth covet the truth of their own accord; and seeing our Saviour Christ himself, when he was on earth, would be called the Truth, as by a name most fit to express all his divine power; yet we, which have been exercised in the holy Scriptures, and which have both read and seen what hath happened to all godly men commonly at all times; what to the prophets, to the apostles, to the holy martyrs, and what to Christ himself; with what rebukes, revilings, and despites they were continually vexed whiles they here lived, and that only for the truth's sake: we, I say, do see that this is not only no new thing, or hard to be believed, but that it is a thing already received, and commonly used from age to age. Nay, truly, this might seem much rather a marvel, and beyond all belief, if the devil, who is the father of lies, and enemy to all truth, would now upon a sudden change his nature, and hope that truth might otherwise be suppressed than by belying it; or that he would begin to establish his own kingdom by using now any other practices than the same which he hath ever used from the beginning. For since any man's remembrance we can scant² find one time, either when religion

did first grow, or when it was settled, or when it did afresh spring up again, wherein truth and innocency were not by all unworthy means, and most despitefully intreated. Doubtless the devil well seeth, that so long as truth is in good safety, himself cannot be safe, nor yet maintain his own estate.

For, letting pass the ancient patriarchs and prophets, who, as we have said, had no part of their life free from contumelies and slanders, we know there were certain in times past which said and commonly preached, that the old ancient Jews (of whom we make no doubt but they were the worshippers of the only and true God) did worship either a sow, or an ass, in God's stead, and that all the same religion was nothing else but a sacrilege, and a plain contempt of all godliness. We know also that the Son of God, our Saviour Jesu Christ, when he taught the truth, was counted a juggler³ and an enchanter, a Samaritan, Beelzebub, a deceiver of the people, a drunkard, and a glutton. Again, who wotteth not what words were spoken against St. Paul, the most earnest and vehement preacher and maintainer of the truth? sometime that he was a seditious and busy man, a raiser of tumults, a causer of rebellion; sometime again, that he was an heretic; sometime, that he was mad; sometime, that only upon strife and stomach he was both a blasphemer of God's law, and a despiser of the fathers' ordinances. Further, who knoweth not how St. Stephen, after he had thoroughly and sincerely embraced the truth, and began frankly and stoutly to preach and set forth the same, as he ought to do, was immediately called to answer for his life, as one that had wickedly uttered disdainful and heinous words against the law, against Moses, against the temple, and against God? Or who is ignorant that in times past there were some which reprov'd the holy Scriptures of falsehood, saying they contained things both contrary and quite one against another; and how that the apostles of Christ did severally disagree between themselves, and that St. Paul did vary from them all? And, not to make rehearsal of all, for that were an endless labour, who knoweth not after what sort our fathers were railed upon in times

past, which first began to acknowledge and profess the name of Christ? how they made private conspiracies, devised secret counsels against the commonwealth, and that end made early and privy meetings in the dark, killed young babes, fed themselves with men's flesh, and, like savage and brute beasts, did drink their blood? in conclusion, how that, after they had put out the candles, they committed adultery between themselves, and without regard wrought incest one with another: that brethren lay with their sisters, sons with their mothers, without any reverence of nature or kin, without shame without difference; and that they were wicked men without all care of religion, and without any opinion of God, being the very enemies of mankind, unworthy to be suffered in the world, and unworthy of life?

All these things were spoken in those days against the people of God, against Christ Jesu, against Paul, against Stephen, and against all them, whosoever they were, which at the first beginning embraced the truth of the gospel, and were contented to be called by the name of Christians, which was then an hateful name among the common people. And although the things which they said were not true, yet the devil thought it should be sufficient for him, if at the least he could bring it so to pass as they might be believed for true, and that the Christians might be brought into a common hatred of every body, and have their death and destruction sought of all sorts. Hereupon kings and princes, being led then by such persuasions, killed all the prophets of God, letting none escape. Esay with a saw, Jeremy with stones, Daniel with lions, Amos with an iron bar, Paul with the sword, and Christ upon the cross; and condemned all Christians to imprisonments, to torments, to the pikes, to be thrown down headlong from rocks and steep places, to be cast to wild beasts, and to be burnt: and made great fires of their quick bodies, for the only purpose to give light by night, and for a very scorn and mocking stock; and did count them no better than the vilest filth, the

offscourings and laughing games of the whole world. Thus, as ye see, have the authors and professors of the truth ever been intreated.

Wherefore, we ought to bear it the more quietly, which have taken upon us to profess the gospel of Christ, if we for the same cause be handled after the same sort; and if we, as our forefathers were long ago, be likewise at this day tormented, and baited with railings, with spiteful dealings, and with lies; and that for no desert of our own, but only because we teach and acknowledge the truth.

They cry out upon us at this present everywhere, that we are all heretics, and have forsaken the faith, and have with new persuasions and wicked learning utterly dissolved the concord of the church; that we renew, and, as it were, fetch again from hell the old and many a day condemned heresies; that we sow abroad new sects, and such broils as never yearst⁴ were heard of: also that we are already divided into contrary parts and opinions, and could yet by no means agree well among ourselves; that we be cursed creatures, and, like the giants, do war against God himself, and live clean without any regard or worshipping of God; that we despise all good deeds; that we use no discipline of virtue, no laws, no customs; that we esteem neither right, nor order, nor equity, nor justice; that we give the bridle to all naughtiness, and provoke the people to all licentiousness and lust; that we labour and seek to overthrow the state of monarchies and kingdoms, and to bring all things under the rule of the rash inconstant people and unlearned multitude; that we have seditiously fallen from the catholic church, and by a wicked schism and division have shaken the whole world, and troubled the common peace and universal quiet of the church; and that, as Dathan and Abiram conspired in times past against Moses and Aaron, even so we at this day have renounced the bishop of Rome without any cause reasonable; that we set nought by the authority of the ancient fathers and councils of old time; that we have rashly and presumptuously disannulled the old ceremonies, which have been well allowed by our fathers and forefathers many hundred years past, both by good

customs, and also in ages of more purity; and that we have by our own private head, without the authority of any sacred and general council, brought new traditions into the church: and have done all these things not for religion's sake, but only upon a desire of contention and strife; but that they for their part have changed no manner of thing, but have held and kept still such a number of years to this very day all things as they were delivered from the apostles and well approved by the most ancient fathers.

And that this matter should not seem to be done but upon privy slander, and to be tossed to and fro in a corner, only to spite us, there have been besides wilily procured by the bishop of Rome certain persons of eloquence enough, and not unlearned neither, which should put their help to this cause, now almost despaired of, and should polish and set forth the same, both in books, and with long tales to the end that, when the matter was trimly and eloquently handled, ignorant and unskilful persons might suspect there was some great thing in it. Indeed they perceived that their own cause did everywhere go to wrack; that their sleights were now espied, and less esteemed; and that their helps did daily fail them; and that their matter stood altogether in great need of a cunning spokesman.

Now as for those things which by them have been laid against us, in part they be manifestly false, and condemned so by their own judgments which spake them; partly again, though they be as false too indeed, yet bear they a certain show and colour of truth, so as the reader (if he take not good heed) may easily be tripped and brought into error by them, specially when their fine and cunning tale is added thereunto. And part of them be of such sort, as we ought not to shun them as crimes or faults, but to acknowledge and profess them as things well done, and upon very good reason.

For shortly to say the truth, these folk falsely accuse and slander all our doings; yea the same things which they themselves cannot deny but to be rightly and orderly done; and for malice do so misconstrue and deprave all our sayings and doings, as though it were impossible

that any thing could be rightly spoken or done by us. They should more plainly and sincerely have gone to work if they would have dealt truly. But now they neither truly, nor sincerely, nor yet Christianly, but darkly and craftily charge and batter us with lies, and do abuse the blindness and fondness of the people, together with the ignorance of princes, to cause us to be hated, and the truth to be suppressed. This, lo ye, is the power of darkness, and of men which lean more to the amazed wondering of the rude multitude and to darkness than they do to truth and light; and as St. Hierom saith, which do openly gainsay the truth, closing up their eyes, and will not see for the nonce.⁵

But we give thanks to the most good and mighty God, that such is our cause, whereagainst (when they would fainest) they were able to utter no despite, but the same which might as well be wrested against the holy fathers, against the prophets, against the apostles, against Peter, against Paul, and against Christ himself.

Now therefore, if it be lawful for these folks to be eloquent and fine-tongued in speaking evil, surely it becometh not us in our cause, being so very good, to be dumb in answering truly. For men to be careless what is spoken by them and their own matter, be it never so falsely and slanderously spoken (especially when it is such that the majesty of God and the cause of religion may thereby be damaged), is the part doubtless of dissolute and wretchless⁶ persons, and of them which wickedly wink at the injuries done unto the name of God. For although other wrongs, yea oftentimes great, may be borne and dissembled of a mild and Christian man, yet he that goeth smoothly away, and dissembleth the matter when he is noted of heresy, Ruffinus was wont to deny that man to be a Christian. We therefore will do the same thing, which all laws, which nature's own voice doth command to be done, and which Christ himself did in like case, when he was checked⁷ and reviled: to the intent we may put off from us these men's slanderous accusations, and may defend soberly and truly our own cause and innocency. For Christ verily, when the

Pharisees charged him with sorcery, as one that had some familiar spirits, and wrought many things by their help: "I," said he, "have not the devil, but do glorify my Father: but it is you that have dishonoured me, and put me to rebuke and shame." And St. Paul, when Festus the lieutenant scorned him as a mad man: "I," said he, "most dear Festus, am not mad, as thou thinkest, but I speak the words of truth and soberness." And the ancient Christians, when they were slandered to the people for mankillers, for adulterers, for committers of incest, for disturbers of the commonweals, and did perceive that by such slanderous accusations the religion which they professed might be brought in question, namely, if they should seem to hold their peace, and in manner to confess the fault; lest this might hinder the free course of the gospel, they made orations, they put up supplications, and made means to⁸ emperors and princes, that they might defend themselves and their fellows in open audience.

But we truly, seeing that so many thousands of our brethren in these last twenty years have borne witness unto the truth, in the midst of most painful torments that could be devised; and when princes, desirous to restrain the gospel, sought many ways, but prevailed nothing; and that now almost the whole world doth begin to open their eyes to behold the light; we take it that our cause hath already been sufficiently declared and defended, and think it not needful to make many words, seeing the matter saith enough for itself. For if the popes would, or else if they could weigh with their own selves the whole matter, and also the beginnings and proceedings of our religion, how in a manner all their travail hath come to nought, nobody driving it forward; and how on the other side, our cause, against the will of emperors from the beginning, against the wills of so many kings, in spite of the popes, and almost maugre the head of all men,⁹ hath taken increase, and by little and little spread over into all countries, and is come at length even into kings' courts and palaces; these same things, methinketh, might be tokens great enough to them, that God himself doth strongly fight in our quarrel, and

doth from heaven laugh at their enterprises; and that the force of truth is such, as neither man's power, nor yet hell-gates are able to root it out. For they be not all mad at this day, so many free cities, so many kings, so many princes, which have fallen away from the seat of Rome, and have rather joined themselves to the gospel of Christ.

And although the popes had never hitherto leisure to consider diligently and earnestly of these matters, or though some other cares do now let them, and diverse ways pull them, or though they count these to be but common and trifling studies, and nothing to appertain to the pope's worthiness, this maketh not why our matter ought to seem the worse. Or if they perchance will not see that which they see indeed, but rather will withstand the known truth, ought we therefore by and bye to be accounted heretics, because we obey not their will and pleasure? If so be, that Pope Pius were the man (we say not, which he would so gladly be called), but if he were indeed a man that either would account us for his brethren, or at least would take us to be men, he would first diligently have examined our reasons, and would have seen what might be said with us, what against us; and would not in his bull, whereby he lately¹⁰ pretended a council, so rashly have condemned so great a part of the world, so many learned and godly men, so many commonwealths, so many kings, and so many princes, only upon his own blind prejudices and foredeterminations, and that without hearing of them speak, or without showing cause why.

But because he hath already so noted us openly, lest by holding our peace we should seem to grant a fault, and specially because we can by no means have audience in the public assembly of the general council, wherein he would no creature should have power to give his voice or to declare his opinion, except he be sworn, and straitly bound to maintain his authority (for we have had good experience hereof in the last conference¹¹ at the council at Trident; where the ambassadors and divines of the princes of Germany, and of the free cities, were quite shut out from their company. Neither can we yet forget, how Julius

the Third, above ten years past,¹² provided warily by his writ that none of our sort should be suffered to speak in the council, except that there were some, peradventure, that would recant and change his opinion): for this cause chiefly we thought it good to yield up an account of our faith in writing, and truly and openly to make answer to those things wherewith we have been openly charged; to the end the world may see the parts and foundations of that doctrine, in the behalf whereof so many good men have little regarded their own lives; and that all men may understand what manner of people they be, and what opinion they have of God and of religion, whom the bishop of Rome, before they were called to tell their tale, hath condemned for heretics, without any good consideration, without any example, and utterly without law or right, only because he heard tell that they did dissent from him and his in some point of religion.

And although St. Hierom would have nobody to be patient when he is suspected of heresy,¹³ yet we will deal herein neither bitterly nor brabblingly;¹⁴ nor yet be carried away with anger and heat; though he ought to be reckoned neither bitter nor brabler that speaketh the truth. We willingly leave this kind of eloquence to our adversaries, who, whatsoever they say against us, be it never so shrewdly or despitefully said, yet think it is said modestly and comely enough, and care nothing whether it be true or false. We need none of these shifts which do maintain the truth.

Further, if we do show it plainly that God's holy gospel, the ancient bishops, and the primitive church do make on our side, and that we have not without just cause left these men, and rather have returned to the apostles and old catholic fathers; and if we shall be found to do the same not colourably or craftily, but in good faith before God, truly, honestly, clearly, and plainly; and if they themselves which fly our doctrine, and would be called catholics, shall manifestly see how all these titles of antiquity, whereof they boast so much, are quite shaken out of their hands; and that there is more pith in this our cause than they thought for; we then hope and trust that none of

them will be so negligent and careless of his own salvation, but he will at length study and bethink himself to whether part he were best to join him. Undoubtedly, except one will altogether harden his heart and refuse to hear, he shall not repent him to give good heed to this our Defence, and to mark well what we say, and how truly and justly it agreeth with Christian religion.

For where they call us heretics, it is a crime so heinous, that unless it may be seen, unless it may be felt, and in manner may be holden with hands and fingers, it ought not lightly to be judged or believed, when it is laid to the charge of any Christian man. For heresy is a forsaking of salvation, a renouncing of God's grace, a departing from the body and spirit of Christ. But this was ever an old and solemn property with them and their forefathers; if any did complain of their errors and faults, and desired to have true religion restored, straightway to condemn such for heretics, as men newfangled and factious. Christ for no other cause was called a Samaritan, but only for that he was thought to have fallen to a certain new religion, and to be the author of a new sect. And Paul the Apostle of Christ was called before the judges to make answer to a matter of heresy; and therefore he said: "According to this way which they call heresy I do worship the God of my fathers, believing all things which be written in the law and in the prophets."

Shortly to speak.¹⁵ This universal religion which Christian men profess at this day was called first of the heathen people a sect and heresy. With these terms did they always fill princes' ears, to the intent when they had once hated us with a predetermined opinion, and had counted all that we said to be faction and heresy, they might be so led away from the truth and right understanding of the cause. But the more sore and outrageous a crime heresy is, the more it ought to be proved by plain and strong arguments, especially in this time, when men begin to give less credit to their words, and to make more diligent search of their doctrine, than they were wont to do. For the people of God are otherwise instructed now than they were in times

past, when all the bishops of Rome's sayings were allowed for gospel, and when all religion did depend only upon their authority. Now-a-days the holy Scripture is abroad, the writings of the apostles and prophets are in print, whereby all truth and catholic doctrine may be proved, and all heresy may be disproved and confuted.

Sithence, then, they bring forth none of these for themselves, and call us nevertheless heretics, which have neither fallen from Christ, nor from the apostles, nor yet from the prophets, this is an injurious and a very spiteful dealing. With this sword did Christ put off the devil when he was tempted of him: with these weapons ought all presumption, which doth advance itself against God, to be overthrown and conquered. "For all Scripture," saith St. Paul, "that cometh by the inspiration of God, is profitable to teach, to confute, to instruct, and to reprove, that the man of God may be perfect, and thoroughly framed to every good work." Thus did the holy fathers always fight against the heretics with none other force than with the holy Scriptures. St. Augustine, when he disputed against Petilian, a heretic of the Donatists: "Let not these words," quod he, "be heard between us, 'I say, or you say:' let us rather speak in this wise: 'Thus saith the Lord.' There let us seek the church: there let us boult out¹⁶ our cause."¹⁷ Likewise St. Hierom: "All those things," saith he, "which without the testimony of the Scriptures are holden as delivered from the apostles, be thoroughly smitten down by the sword of God's word." St. Ambrose also, to Gratian the emperor: "Let the Scripture," saith he, "be asked the question, let the prophets be asked, and let Christ be asked." For at that time made the catholic fathers and bishops no doubt but that our religion might be proved¹⁸ out of the holy Scriptures. Neither were they ever so hardy as to take any for an heretic, whose error they could not evidently and apparently reprove by the self-same Scriptures. And we verily do make answer on this wise, as St. Paul did: "According to this way which they call heresy we do worship God, and the Father of our

Lord Jesus Christ; and do allow all things which have been written either in the law or in the prophets,” or in the apostles’ works.

Wherefore, if we be heretics, and they (as they would fain be called) be catholics, why do they not, as they see the fathers, which were catholic men, have always done? Why do they not convince and master us by the divine scriptures? Why do they not call us again to be tried by them? Why do they not lay before us how we have gone away from Christ, from the prophets, from the apostles, and from the holy fathers? Why stick they to do it? Why are they afraid of it? It is God’s cause. Why are they doubtful to commit it to the trial of God’s word? If we be heretics, which refer all our controversies unto the holy Scriptures, and report us to the self-same words which we know were sealed by God himself, and in comparison of them set little by all other things, whatsoever may be devised by men, how shall we say to these folk, I pray you what manner of men be they, and how is it meet to call them, which fear the judgment of the holy scriptures, that is to say, the judgment of God himself, and do prefer before them their own dreams and full cold inventions; and, to maintain their own traditions, have defaced and corrupted, now these many hundred years, the ordinances of Christ and of the apostles?

Men say that Sophocles, the tragical poet, when in his old days he was by his own sons accused before the judges for a doting and sottish man, as one that fondly wasted his own substance, and seemed to need a governor to see unto him; to the intent he might clear himself of the fault, he came into the place of judgment; and when he had rehearsed before them his tragedy called *OEdipus Coloneus*, which he had written at the very time of his accusation, marvellous exactly and cunningly, did of himself ask the judges¹⁹ whether they thought any sottish or doting man could do the like piece of work.

In like manner, because these men take us to be mad, and appeach us for heretics, as men which have nothing to do, neither with Christ, nor with the church of God, we have judged it should be to good purpose, and not unprofitable, if we do openly and frankly set forth

our faith wherein we stand, and shew all that confidence which we have in Christ Jesu; to the intent all men may see what is our judgment of every part of Christian religion, and may resolve with themselves, whether the faith which they shall see confirmed by the words of Christ, by the writings of the apostles, by the testimonies of the catholic fathers, and by the examples of many ages, be but a certain rage of furious and mad men, and a conspiracy of heretics. This therefore is our belief.

¹ The numerals in the inner margin refer to the *Defence of the Apology*, as printed in volumes iv. v. and vi. of the Oxford octavo edition of Bishop Jewel's Works. The Chapters and Divisions will serve also for other editions.

² "Scant," here and in p. 1, scarcely.

³ Def. of Apol. "sorcerer."

⁴ So the word is spelt in the original: more commonly "erst," i.e. of old.

⁵ "For the nonce," on purpose.

⁶ "Wretchless," reckless.

⁷ "To check," to chide.

⁸ "To make means to," to use every effort to persuade.

⁹ In defiance of all men.

¹⁰ The date of the "Bulla celebrationis," which decreed the renewal of the Council, was Nov. 29, 1560; but the Council was not re-opened (for its seventeenth session) till Jan. 18, 1562. From the expression in the text, it may be inferred, that Jewel was not yet aware of its actual opening.

¹¹ This was the sixteenth session, which was abruptly closed April 28, 1552.—(See Sleidan's "History of the Reformation," and Sarpi's "History of the Council of Trent," under that date.)

¹² See a passage similar to this in the Epist. ad Scip. in Calvin. The authority quoted by Jewel is the "Breve Julii tertii; citatur a Calvino." (Def. Apol. Works, iv. p. 238.) The Editor has not succeeded in finding either the Brief, or the passage in Calvin.

¹³ Hieron. ad Pammach. Works, vol. viii. p. 94, and the notes there, 63 and 64. "Nolo in suspitione haereseos quenquam esse patientem; ne apud eos qui ignorant innocentiam ejus, dissimulatio conscientia judicetur, si taceat."

¹⁴ "Brabblingly," clamorously.

¹⁵ These three sentences were omitted in the Defence of the Apology.

¹⁶ To "boul't out," to sift, to examine.

¹⁷ The Defence (Works, iv. pp. 276–277) adds further authorities to the same effect.

¹⁸ Apol. Lat. adds "satis."

PART I

¹⁹ In the Def. of the Apol. “did ask the judges in his own behalf.”

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