The 'Millenary Petition' (1603)
The Humble Petition of the Ministers of the Church of England, desiring reformation of certain ceremonies and abuses of the Church

To the Most Christian and Excellent Prince, our gracious and dread sovereign James, by the grace of God King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, defender of the faith &c., we the ministers of the Church of England that desire reformation wish a long and happy reign over us in this life, and in the next everlasting salvation.

Most gracious and dread sovereign,
Seeing it hath pleased the divine majesty, to the great comfort of all good Christians, to advance Your Highness, according to your just title, to the peaceable government of this Church and commonwealth of England, we the ministers of the gospel in this land, neither as factious men, affecting a popular parity in the Church, nor as schismatics aiming at the dissolution of the state ecclesiastical, but as the faithful servants of Christ, and loyal subjects to Your Majesty, desiring and longing for the redress of diverse abuses of the Church, could do no less in our obedience to God, service to your Majesty, love his Church, then to acquaint Your Princely Majesty with our particular griefs; for as your princely pen writeth, The King as a good physician must first know what peccant humours his patient naturally is most subject unto, before he can begin his cure. And although diverse of us that sue for reformation have formerly, in respect of the times, subscribed to the book, some upon protestation, some upon expositions given them, some with condition, rather than the Church should have been deprived of our labours and ministry; yet now wee to the number of more than a thousand of your Majesty's subjects and ministers, all groaning as under one common burden of human rites and ceremonies, do with one joint consent humble ourselves at Your Majesty's feet to be eased and relieved in this behalf. Our humble suit, then, unto Your Majesty, is that those offences following, some may be removed, some amended, some qualified.

1. In the Church service: that the cross in baptism, interrogatories ministered to infants, [and] conformation, as superfluous, may be taken away: baptism not to be ministered by women, and so explained; the cap and surplice not urged; that examination may go before the communion; that it be ministered with a sermon; that diverse terms of priest, absolution, and some others used, with the ring in marriage, and other such like in the book may be corrected; the longsomeness of the service abridged; church songs and music moderated to better edifying; that the Lord's Day be not profaned; the rest upon holy days not so strictly urged; that there may be an uniformity of doctrine prescribed: no popish opinion to be any more taught or defended, nor ministers charged to teach their people to bow at the name of Jesus; that the canonical scriptures only be read in the church.

2. Concerning church ministers. That none hereafter be admitted into the ministry, but able and sufficient men, and those to preach diligently, and especially upon the Lord's Day; and such as be already entered, and cannot preach, may either be removed and some charitable course taken with them for their relief, or else be forced according to the value of their livings to maintain preachers; that non-residence be not permitted; that King Edward's statute for the lawfulness of ministers' marriage be revived; that ministers be not urged to