

Statement of Faith

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

We believe that the Bible is God's written revelation to man, given to us by the Holy Spirit, the inerrant Word of God.¹

We believe that the Word of God is absolutely inerrant in the original documents, infallible, and God-breathed.²

We believe that God spoke in His written Word by a process of dual authorship. The Holy Spirit so super-intended the human authors that, through their individual personalities and different styles of writing, they composed and recorded God's Word to man³ without error in the whole or in the part.⁴

GOD

We believe that there is but one living and true God⁵, an infinite, all-knowing Spirit⁶, perfect in all His attributes, one in essence, eternally existing in three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit⁷—each equally deserving worship and obedience.

GOD THE FATHER

We believe that God the Father, the first person of the Trinity, orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace.⁸ He is the Creator of all things.⁹ As the only absolute and omnipotent ruler in the universe, He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption.¹⁰ His fatherhood involves both His designation within the Trinity and His relationship with mankind. As Creator He is Father to all men, but He is Spiritual Father only to believers.¹¹ He has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass.¹² He continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and events.¹³ In His sovereignty He is neither author nor approver of sin, nor does He abridge the accountability of more, intelligent creatures.¹⁴ He has graciously chosen from eternity past those whom He would have as His own; He saves from sin all those who come to Him; and He becomes, upon adoption, Father to His own.¹⁵

¹ 1 Cor. 2:7-14; 2 Pet. 1:20, 21

² Matt. 5:18; 24:35; John 10:35; 16:12, 13; 17:17; 1 Cor. 2:13; 1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Heb. 4:12; 2 Pet. 1:20-21

³ 2 Peter 1:20-21

⁴ Matt. 5:18; 2 Tim. 3:16

⁵ Deut. 6:4; Is. 45:5-7; 1 Cor. 8:4

⁶ John 4:24

⁷ Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14

⁸ Ps. 145:8, 9; 1 Cor. 8:6

⁹ Gen. 1:1-13; Eph. 3:9

¹⁰ Job 12:13-25; Ps. 103:19; Rom. 11:36; Eph. 1:11

¹¹ Rom. 8:14; Eph. 4:6; 2 Cor. 6:18

¹² Eph. 1:11

¹³ Job 12:13-25; 1 Chr. 29:11; Dan. 4:34-35

¹⁴ Hab. 1:13; 1 Pet. 1:17

Hab. 1:13; 1 Pet. 1:17

GOD THE SON

We believe that Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, is co-equal, consubstantial, and coeternal with the Father.¹⁶

We believe that God the Father created “the heavens and the earth and all that is in them” according to His own will, *through* His Son, Jesus Christ, by whom all things continue in existence and in operations.¹⁷

We believe that in the incarnation (God becoming man) Christ surrendered only the prerogatives of deity but nothing of the divine essence, either in degree or kind. In His incarnation, the eternally existing second person of the Trinity accepted all the essential characteristics of humanity and so became the God-man, fully God and fully man.¹⁸ In His person, Jesus Christ represents humanity and deity in indivisible oneness.¹⁹

We believe that our Lord Jesus Christ was virgin born,²⁰ that He was God incarnate,²¹ and that the purpose of the incarnation was to reveal God, redeem men, and to rule over God’s kingdom.²²

We believe that, in the incarnation, the second person of the Trinity laid aside His right to the full prerogatives of coexistence with God, assumed the place of a Son, and took on an existence appropriate to a servant while never divesting Himself of His divine attributes.²³

We believe that our Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through the shedding of His blood and sacrificial death on the cross, and that His death was voluntary, vicarious, substitutionary, propitiatory, and redemptive.²⁴

We believe that on the basis of the efficacy of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, the believing sinner is freed from the punishment, penalty, and power of sin in this life, and upon death or the return of our Lord, is finally freed from the very presence of sin and that he is declared righteous, given eternal life, and adopted into the family of God.²⁵

We believe that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead and that He is now ascended to the right hand of the Father, where He now mediates as our Advocate and High-Priest, interceding for believers.²⁶

We believe that in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave, God confirmed the deity of His Son and gave proof that God has accepted the atoning work of Christ on the cross. Jesus’ bodily resurrection is also the guarantee of a future resurrection unto eternal life for all believers.²⁷

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the one through whom God will judge all mankind including believers.²⁸

¹⁵ John 1:12; Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:5; Eph. 1:4-6; Heb. 12:5-9

¹⁶ John 10:30; 14:9

¹⁷ John 1:3; Col. 1:15-17; Heb. 1:2

¹⁸ Phil. 2:5-8; Col. 2:9

¹⁹ Mic. 5:2; John 5:23; 14:9; Col. 2:9

²⁰ Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:23, 25; Luke 1:26-35

²¹ John 1:1, 14

²² Ps. 2:7-9; Isa. 9:6; John 1:29; Phil. 2:9-11; Heb. 7:25, 26; 1 Pet. 1:18-19

²³ Phil. 2:5-8

²⁴ John 10:15; Rom. 3:24, 25; 5:8; 1 Pet. 2:24; 1 John 2:2; 4:10

²⁵ Rom. 3:25; 5:8, 9; 2 Cor. 5:14, 15; 1 Pet. 2:24; 3:18

²⁶ Matt. 28:6; Luke 24:38, 39; Acts 2:30, 31; Rom. 4:25; 8:34; Heb. 4:14-16; 7:25; 9:24; 1 John 2:1

GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person, eternal, underived, possessing all the attributes of personality and deity, including intellect, emotions, will, eternity, omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence and truthfulness.²⁹ In all the divine attributes He is coequal and consubstantial with the Father and the Son.³⁰

We believe that it is the work of the Holy Spirit to execute the divine will with relation to all mankind. We recognize His sovereign activity in the creation, the incarnation, the written revelation, and the work of salvation.³¹

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the supernatural and sovereign agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the body of Christ, that He indwells, sanctifies, instructs, empowers them for service, and seals them unto the day of redemption.³² Thus, we believe that every believer possesses the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit from the moment of salvation, and it is the duty of all those born of the Spirit to be filled with (controlled by) the Spirit.³³

We believe that the Holy Spirit administers spiritual gifts to the church. The Holy Spirit glorifies neither Himself nor His gifts by ostentatious displays, but He does glorify Christ by implementing His work of redeeming the lost and building up believers in the most holy faith.³⁴

MAN

We believe that man was directly and immediately created by God in His image and likeness. Man was created free of sin with a rational nature, intelligence, volition, self-determination, and moral responsibility to God.³⁵ God's intention in the creation of man was that man should glorify God, enjoy God's fellowship, live his life in the will of God, and by this accomplish God's purpose for man in the world.³⁶

We believe that in Adam's sin of disobedience to the revealed will and Word of God, man lost his innocence; incurred the penalty of spiritual and physical death; became subject to the wrath of God; and became inherently corrupt and utterly incapable of choosing or doing that which is acceptable to God apart from divine grace. With no recuperative powers to enable him to recover himself, man is hopelessly lost. Man's salvation is thereby wholly of God's grace through the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ.³⁷

We believe that because all men were in Adam, a nature corrupted by Adam's sin has been transmitted to all men of all ages, Jesus Christ being the only exception. All men are thus sinners by nature, by choice, and by divine declaration.³⁸

²⁷ John 5:26-29; 14:19; Rom. 4:25; 6:5-10; 1 Cor. 15:20

²⁸ Matt. 25:31-46; John 5:22, 23; Acts 17:31; 1 Cor. 3:10-15; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:11-15

²⁹ Ps. 139:7-10; Isa. 40:13, 14; John 16:13; Rom. 15:13; 1 Cor. 2:10, 13; 12:11; Eph. 4:30; Heb. 9:14

³⁰ Matt. 28:19; Acts 5:3, 4; 28:25, 26; 1 Cor. 12:4-6; 2 Cor. 13:14; Heb. 10:15-17

³¹ Gen. 1:2; Matt. 1:18; John 3:5-7; 2 Pet. 1:20-21

³² Rom. 8:9-11; 1 Cor. 12:13; 2 Cor. 3:6; Eph. 1:13

³³ Rom. 8:9-11; Eph. 5:18; 1 John 2:20, 27

³⁴ John 16:13, 14; Acts 1:8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11; 2 Cor. 3:18

³⁵ Gen. 2:7, 15-25; Jas. 3:9

³⁶ Isa. 43:7; Col. 1:16; Rev. 4:11

SALVATION

We believe that salvation is wholly of God by grace on the basis of the redemption of Jesus Christ, the merit of His shed blood, and not on the basis of human merit or works.³⁹

ELECTION

We believe that election is the act of God by which, before the foundation of the world, He chose in Christ those whom He graciously regenerates, saves, and sanctifies.⁴⁰ The reality of divine election does not contradict or negate the responsibility of man to repent and trust Christ as Savior and Lord.⁴¹ All whom the Father calls to Himself will come in faith and all who come in faith the Father will receive.⁴²

REGENERATION

We believe that regeneration is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit by which the divine nature and divine life are given.⁴³ It is instantaneous and is accomplished solely by the power of the Holy Spirit through the instrumentality of the Word of God, when the repentant sinner, as enabled by the Holy Spirit, responds in faith to the divine provision of salvation. Genuine regeneration is manifested by fruits reflecting repentance as demonstrated in righteous attitudes and conduct. Good works will be its proper evidence and fruit.⁴⁴ This obedience causes the believer to be increasingly conformed to the image of our Lord Jesus Christ; such a conformity is climaxed in the believer's glorification at Christ's coming.⁴⁵

JUSTIFICATION

We believe that justification before God is an act of God by which He declares righteous those who, through faith in Christ, repent of their sins and confess Him as sovereign Lord.⁴⁶ This righteousness is apart from any virtue or work of man and involves the placing of our sins on Christ and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us.⁴⁷ By this means God is enabled to "be just, and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus."⁴⁸

³⁷ Gen. 2:16, 17; 3:1-19; John 3:36; Rom. 3:10-18, 23; 6:23; 1 Cor. 2:14; Eph. 2:1-3; 1 Tim. 2:13, 14; 1 John 1:8

³⁸ Ps. 14:1-3; Jer. 17:9; Rom. 3:9-18, 23; 5:10-12

³⁹ John 1:12; Eph. 1:4-7; 2:8-10; 1 Pet. 1:18-19

⁴⁰ Rom. 8:28-30; Eph. 1:4-11; 2 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 2:10; 1 Pet. 1:1, 2

⁴¹ Ezek. 18:23, 32; 33:11; John 3:18, 19, 36; 5:40; 2 Thess. 2:10-12; Rev. 22:17)

⁴² John 6:37-40, 44; Acts 13:48; Jas. 4:8

⁴³ John 3:3-8; Titus 3:5

⁴⁴ 1 Cor. 6:19-20; Eph. 5:17-21; Phil. 2:12b; Col. 3:12-17; 2 Pet. 1:4-11

⁴⁵ Rom. 8:16-17; 2 Cor. 3:18; 2 Pet. 1:4; 1 John 3:2-3

SANCTIFICATION

We believe that every believer is sanctified (set apart) unto God by justification and is therefore declared to be holy and is therefore identified as a saint. This sanctification has to do with the believer's standing before God, not his present walk or condition.⁴⁹

We believe that there is also, by the work of the Holy Spirit, a progressive sanctification by which the state of the believer is brought closer to the likeness of Christ through obedience to the Word of God and the empowering of the Holy Spirit. The believer is able to live a life of increasing holiness in conformity to the will of God, becoming more and more like our Lord Jesus Christ.⁵⁰

In this respect, we believe that every saved person is involved in a daily conflict—the new creation in Christ doing battle against the flesh—but adequate provision is made for victory through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. The struggle nevertheless stays with the believer all through this earthly life and is never completely ended. Eradication of sin is not possible, but the Holy Spirit does provide for victory over sin.⁵¹

SECURITY

We believe that all the redeemed once saved are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever.⁵² It is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word; scripture, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an excuse for sinful living and carnality.⁵³

THE CHURCH

We believe that all who place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately placed by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual body, the church, the bride of Christ, of which Christ is the head.⁵⁴ Thus, we believe that the church is a unique spiritual organism designed by Christ, made up of all born-again believers.

We believe that the establishment and continuity of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures and that the members of the one scriptural body are directed to associate themselves together in local assemblies.⁵⁵

⁴⁶ Isa. 55:6, 7; Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 11:18; Rom. 2:4; 3:28; 4:5; 8:30, 33; 10:9, 10; 1 Cor. 12:3; 2 Cor. 4:5; Gal. 2:16; Phil. 2:11; 3:9

⁴⁷ Rom. 3:20; 4:6; 1 Cor. 1:2, 30; 6:11; 2 Cor. 5:21; Phil. 3:9; Col. 2:14; 1 Pet. 2:24

⁴⁸ Rom. 3:26

⁴⁹ Acts 20:32; 1 Cor. 1:2, 30; 6:11; 2 Thess. 2:13; Heb. 2:11; 3:1; 10:10, 14; 13:12; 1 Pet. 1:2

⁵⁰ John 17:17, 19; Rom. 6:1-22; 2 Cor. 3:18; 1 Thess. 4:3, 4; 5:23

⁵¹ Gal. 5:16-25; Eph. 4:22-24; Phil. 3:12; Col. 3:9, 10; 1 Pet. 1:14-16; 1 John 3:5-9

⁵² John 5:24; 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Rom. 5:9, 10; 8:1, 31-39; 1 Cor. 1:4-9; Eph. 4:30; Heb. 7:25; 13:5; 1 Pet. 1:4, 5; Jude 24

⁵³ Rom. 6:15-22; 13:13, 14; Gal. 5:13, 16, 17, 25, 26; Titus 2:11-14

We believe that the one supreme authority for the church is Christ and that church leadership, gifts, order, discipline and worship are all appointed through His sovereignty as found in the Scriptures.⁵⁶ The biblically designated officers serving under Christ and over the assembly are elders and deacons, both of whom must meet biblical qualification.⁵⁷

We believe that these leaders lead or rule as servants of Christ and have His authority in directing the church. The congregation is to submit to their leadership.⁵⁸

We believe in the importance of discipleship, mutual accountability of all believers to each other, as well as the need for discipline for sinning members of the congregation in accord with the standards of Scripture.⁵⁹

We believe that the purpose of the church is to glorify God by building its members up in love and the faith, by instruction of the Word, by fellowship, by keeping the ordinances and by advancing and communicating the gospel to the entire world.⁶⁰

We believe that all saints are called to the work of service.⁶¹

We believe the church must cooperate with God as He accomplishes His purpose in the world. To that end, He gives the church spiritual gifts. These gifts include men and women chosen for the purpose of equipping the saints for the work of ministry, as well as unique and special spiritual abilities given to each member of the body of Christ.⁶²

We believe that two ordinances have been committed to the local church: baptism and the Lord's Supper.⁶³ Christian baptism by immersion is the solemn and beautiful testimony of a believer showing forth his faith in the crucified, buried and risen Savior, and his union with Him in death to sin and resurrection to new life.⁶⁴ It is also a sign of fellowship and identification with the visible body of Christ.⁶⁵

We believe that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration and proclamation of His death until He comes.⁶⁶ As well, we believe that whereas the elements of communion are only representative of the flesh and blood of Christ, the Lord's Supper is nevertheless an actual Communion with the risen Christ who is present in a unique way, fellowshiping with His people.⁶⁷ Because the Lord's Supper is an act of obedience by members of the Lord's church, it has as a prerequisite acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and obedience in baptism.

⁵⁴ 1 Cor. 12:12, 13; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 1:22; 4:15; 5:23-32; Col. 1:18; Rev. 19:7, 8

⁵⁵ Acts 14:23, 27; 20:17, 28; 1 Cor. 11:18-20; Gal. 1:2; Phil. 1:1; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1; Heb. 10:25

⁵⁶ Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18

⁵⁷ 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Pet. 5:1-5

⁵⁸ 1 Tim. 5:17-22; Heb. 13:7, 17

⁵⁹ Matt. 18:15-12; 28:19, 20; Acts 5:1-11; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; Gal. 6:1; 2 Thess. 3:6-15; 1 Tim. 1:19, 20; 2 Tim. 2:2; Titus 1:10-16

⁶⁰ Matt. 28:19; Luke 22:19; Acts 1:8; 2:38-42, 47; Eph. 3:21; 4:13-16; 2 Tim. 2:2, 15; 3:16, 17; 1 John 1:3

⁶¹ 1 Cor. 15:5; Eph. 4:12; Rev. 22:12

⁶² Rom. 12:5-8; Eph. 4:7-12; 1 Cor. 12-14; 1 Pet. 4:10, 11

⁶³ Acts 2:38-42

⁶⁴ Acts 8:36-39; Rom. 6:1-11

LAST THINGS (ESCHATOLOGY)

We believe that physical death involves no loss of our immaterial consciousness, that there is a separation of soul and body, that the soul of the redeemed passes immediately into the presence of Christ, and that the soul of the unredeemed passes immediately into conscious torment.⁷¹

We believe in the personal, bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ in judgment.⁷²

We believe that all people will appear before the throne of Christ, and in the bodily resurrection of all men—which involves a reunion of the soul and body—the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and the punishment of everlasting conscious torment in hell.⁷³ We believe that the ultimate destination of the redeemed is the eternal state of glory with God in the new heavens and new earth wherein only righteousness dwells.⁷⁴

EVANGELISM

We believe it is the duty of all believers to seek to make disciples of all nations. This is an outpouring of the birth of love for others in a believer. The Lord Jesus has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek to point the lost to Christ by word and deed.

MARRIAGE & FAMILY

We believe that Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image⁷⁵. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. The family is the foundational institution to human society. Marriage is a gift from God between one man and one woman, and as such the marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people, and images Christ's love for His church, as a Bridegroom loves his bride. Just as the church seeks to grow and reproduce itself, so children are a blessing from the Lord.

⁶⁵ Acts 2:41, 42

⁶⁶ 1 Cor. 11:23-26

⁶⁷ 1 Cor. 10:16

⁶⁸ Luke 2:9-14; Heb. 1:6, 7, 14; 2:6, 7; Rev. 5:11-14

⁶⁹ Gen. 3:1-15; Isa. 14:12-17; Ezek. 28:11-19; Matt. 25:41; Rev. 12:1-14

⁷⁰ Isa. 14:12-17; Ezek. 28:11-19; Matt. 4:1-11; 25:41; Rom. 16:20; Rev. 12:9-10; 20:10

⁷¹ Luke 16:19-31; 23:43; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; Jas 2:26; Rev. 6:9-11

⁷² Matt. 26:64; Mark 13:26; 14:62; Luke 21:27; Acts 1:11; 1 Thess. 4:16; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; Titus 2:13; 1 John 3:2; Rev. 19:11-21

⁷³ Dan. 12:2; Matt. 25:31-46; John 5:28, 29; 6:39; Rom. 8:10, 11, 19-23; 14:10-12; 1 Cor. 15:35-44, 50-54; 2 Cor. 4:14; 5:10; 1 Thess. 4:16; 2 Thess. 1:9; Rev. 20:11-15

⁷⁴ 2 Pet. 3:10-13; Rev. 21, 22

⁷⁵ Gen. 1:26-30; 2:18-22;