

Statement of Faith

I. One God

We believe in an eternal God who freely created all of existence (time, space, matter) out of nothing (ex nihilo) and that He continues to act within the creation in varying degrees. He has chosen to reveal Himself within the limits of his Word. We can know God but we cannot know him fully.

We Believe in One God, sovereign, holy, just, good, gracious, merciful, infinite, loving, longsuffering, immutable, incomprehensible, eternal, almighty, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, and perfect in every aspect of His nature and character. In the unity of the Godhead there are Three Persons of one substance, power, and eternity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit – all of whom are fully God, all of whom are equal.

II. God the Father

We Believe God the Father is the Eternal and Sovereign Creator of Heaven and earth. He rules over all creation in His Divine Providence and Sovereignty, and as such, His plans and purposes decreed from all eternity cannot be thwarted. We believe that God the Father, motivated by nothing but the counsel of His own will, mercy, grace, and love, implemented a perfect plan to save a multitude of imperfect sinners from every nation, tribe, and tongue, by sending His perfect Son to perfectly accomplish their salvation.

III. Jesus Christ

We Believe Jesus Christ is One Person with two distinct natures, being fully God and fully man, perfect in nature, teaching, and obedience. We believe in His virgin birth; in His sinless life; in His miracles; and that He voluntarily atoned for the sins of His people by dying on the cross as a substitute for sinners, as a sacrifice for sin, and as a propitiation of the wrath of God toward sinners, thus satisfying divine justice and accomplishing salvation for all those whom the Father has given Him. We believe that He rose bodily from the dead and ascended bodily into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God the Father where He ever lives to make intercession for His people. We believe that someday he will return in power and glory.

IV. The Holy Spirit

We Believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, who unites believers to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ by perfectly applying the redemption perfectly wrought by Christ for His sheep, bringing about the new birth, and bestowing to them the gifts of saving faith and repentance from sins. The Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, and regenerates, indwells, empowers, comforts, leads, guides, teaches, and sanctifies believers. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He seals the believer until the day of final redemption. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service. The Holy Spirit is to be worshipped as God the Third Person of the Trinity.

V. The Holy Bible

We Believe and accept the Holy Bible, including the 39 books of the Old Testament and the 27 books of the New Testament, to be the inspired, complete, infallible and inerrant Word of God, such that, to disbelieve or disobey any word of scripture is to disbelieve or disobey God. God's Word is itself truth and, in the original manuscripts, does not affirm anything that is contrary to fact. Its teachings are clear and able to be understood through proper exegesis and hermeneutics. The Scriptures must be understood in their original historical, grammatical, and literary context. The Scriptures are necessary for knowing the gospel, for maintaining spiritual life, and for knowing god's will and contain everything that God intended His people to know. The Scriptures are, therefore, the only infallibly authoritative rule and guide of all Christian life, practice, and doctrine. We believe the Bible is God's revelation of the history of the universe and answers life's questions of where did we come from, where are we going, and what is the purpose of living.

VI. Man

We believe Man was created by the special act of God, in the image of God, and is the crowning work of His creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by God with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. All mankind participated in Adam's fall from his original sinless state and is thus lost in sin and totally helpless. That historic fall brought all men under divine condemnation. Man's nature is corrupted, and he is, therefore, totally unable to please God without first being regenerated and renewed by the Holy Spirit. It's not that man cannot choose God, as though some external thing is preventing him from exercising his choice, but that he will not choose God because his desires incline him against that choice. In other words, when fallen man exercises his freedom to do what he wants to do he will always choose against God. Man sins because he is a sinner.

We believe the bible teaches that men and women are of equal worth, dignity, and responsibility before God (ontological equality). The Bible also teaches that men and women have different roles to play in society, the family, and the church. These roles do not compete but complement each other.

VII. The Way of Salvation

We believe that God is sovereign in salvation. Salvation is an event and a process in which people are brought into a right relationship with God. In man's fallen state he will not, in any sense, choose to follow God so God rescues him from his rebellion by sovereignly changing his nature and re-inclining his will and heart. This act of God is an act of mercy and grace that man does not deserve. God does not do this for every person but elects those who will be saved.

We believe men are justified on the simple and single ground of the shed blood of Christ and upon the simple and solitary condition of faith in Him who shed His blood, and are born again by the quickening, renewing, cleansing work of the Holy Spirit, through the instrumentality of the Word of God. No work, on the part of fallen man, could ever contribute in any way to his own salvation. Those who by repentance and faith have believed in their heart that Jesus Christ is Lord are justified by God and become children of God and receive eternal life. At death, their spirits depart to be with Christ in conscious blessedness, and at the second coming of Christ their bodies shall be raised, transformed into the likeness of the body of His glory.

VIII. Regeneration

We believe that regeneration is the supernatural act of God alone, by the Holy Spirit, whereby He awakens or regenerates the dead spirit of a person, restoring the ability to respond to and have a relationship with Him. We are saved by free grace, not by free will. At one moment we are spiritually dead, and then at the next moment we have new spiritual life from God. This change in life will become evident over time in patterns of behaviour and desires that are pleasing to God.

IX. Conversion

We believe that conversion is our willing response to the gospel call, in which we repent of our sins and place our trust (faith) in Christ alone for salvation.

*We believe **repentance** is the response to the convicting work of the Holy Spirit where sinful man is made aware of the evil of his sin. He humbles himself with godly sorrow, detesting sin, and abhorring self, with a purpose and endeavour to walk before God to please Him in all things. It is a change in disposition and attitude toward sin and Christ. You don't ever want to sin again and you want to obey Christ. It is important to realise that mere sorrow for one's actions, or even deep remorse over one's actions, does not constitute genuine repentance unless it is accompanied by a sincere decision to forsake sin that is committed against God.*

*We believe Saving **Faith** is the belief in and understanding of the facts of the gospel. It includes a conviction that the facts are true, especially the fact that I am a sinner in need of salvation and that Christ alone has paid the penalty for my sin and offers salvation to me. It also includes awareness that I need to trust in Christ for salvation and that He is the only way to God, and the only means provided for my salvation. To place my trust in Christ is something done with my heart.*

It is important to realise that faith and repentance are not confined to the beginning of the Christian life. They are attitudes of heart that continue throughout our lives as Christians. Although I may pray a prayer of repentance and trust, it is not the prayer that saves, but God, through the blood of Christ that saves.

X. Justification

We believe that justification is an instantaneous legal act of God's free grace where He pardons all our sins and declares us as righteous while still in a sinning state. God does this, not by any good work that we have done, but by imputing Christ's righteousness to the believer's account. That declaration brings us into a state of peace and favour with God and secures us forever.

XI. Adoption

We believe that in regeneration God gives us new spiritual life within; in justification God gives us a right legal standing before Him; and in adoption God makes us members of His family. Adoption focuses on the personal relationship that salvation gives us with God and with His people. One of the greatest privileges of our adoption is being able to speak to God and relate to Him as a good and loving Father. In adoption, the Holy Spirit leads us and God disciplines us as His children. We are also members of God's family, the church.

XII. Sanctification

We believe that sanctification is the life-long process of God and man that makes us more and more free from sin and like Christ in our lives. It is how we become a better Christian. Sanctification is never completed in this life. The role that we play in sanctification is both a passive one in which we depend on God to sanctify us, and an active one in which we strive to obey God and take steps that will increase our sanctification. Our most active role is to grow in our knowledge of God through the study of God's Word. The essence of sanctification is bearing the image of God. It is to rejoice in God's presence, to love Him above all else, and to live for His glory, not our own. The most basic question of human existence becomes, "How can I bring glory to God?" Bringing glory to God is found in the way we live. The awesome responsibility of sanctification is expressed in simple acts of obedience.

XIII. The Perseverance of the Saints

We believe that those who are true converts will be kept by God's power and will persevere as Christians until the end of their lives, and that only those who persevere until the end have been truly born again. All Christians are moving in the same direction. Some are moving more quickly than others are and all experience temporary setbacks. Anyone who goes a different direction simply is not a Christian. God puts an ongoing holy fear of Himself into the hearts of believers that secures their abiding faithfulness to Him. Our assurance of salvation is not the sincerity of a prayer but the evidence of a regenerating work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts through obedience, continued repentance of sin and a long-term pattern of growth.

XIV. Assurance

Our assurance is not in our confession, but in the fruit of our changed life. Our lifestyle must change. We cannot remain in sin – it will repulse us. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit. There is evidence of a regenerating work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts as demonstrated by a sense of being led by the Holy Spirit in paths of obedience to God's will. We will also see evidence of the "fruit of the Spirit" and Godly attitude and character. Our lives should also have a positive influence on others through encouragement and proclamation of the gospel. It is also evidenced in our acceptance of sound doctrine and love for the church. We want to glorify God through obedience, holiness, prayer, evangelism, fellowship and love for the Word of God.

XV. The Church

We believe that the church is the body of Christ composed of all those who have been justified by faith alone and have been baptised into the body of Christ with the Holy Spirit. God admonishes His people to assemble together regularly to worship Him through prayer, praise, and proclamation of the Word, participation in the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and for mutual edification and encouragement.

We believe that Christians need each other and need a good local church to instruct, counsel, and, if need be, correct them. We believe the church should be a spiritual family that cares about the spiritual welfare of its members. We believe that the preaching (systematic exposition) and teaching of the Word should be central in the life of the local church. We believe that the Word of God should order the policies, practices, and worship of the church. Everything the church does is to and for the glory of God.

We believe that God has and will gift (enable) individuals in order to help the church fulfill its duty to God and man. We believe that miracles could still be given today, but believers need to be careful about outright acceptance of people's claims of possession of "miraculous gifts".

We believe that the ultimate and ruling authority for the church comes from its Head, the Lord Jesus Christ. The pastor and elders are elected to their office by the congregation as stewards of Christ's headship in the church. We believe the church is governed by a plurality of elders.

XVI. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion in water of a believer who gives a believable profession of faith in Jesus Christ. It signifies repentance from sin and rebellion against God, and signifies a commitment to becoming a disciple of Christ. It is also an emblem of our faith in the crucified, buried and risen Saviour. Therefore, we will only receive into membership those who have experienced believer's baptism by immersion.

We believe the Lord's Supper is an act of worship that commemorates the death of Christ; symbolically confesses trust in the substitutionary atonement; uniquely confesses belief in the unified body of Christ; and uniquely proclaims Christ until the second coming. Participation is for believers who are in right standing with God and the church.

XVII. Evangelism and the Gospel Message

We believe in the necessity and responsibility of evangelism. We desire to see true biblical conversion through the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Our mission is not to get as many people as possible to 'walk the aisle'. We constantly proclaim and explain the gospel and take time with people struggling to understand what it means to follow Christ. Through the proclamation of the gospel, God effectively calls the elect to himself in such a way that they respond in saving faith.

XVIII. The Kingdom

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who wilfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. The Kingdom came in the first coming of Jesus Christ and was inaugurated at the cross. Its main activity is the redemption of people through the preaching of the gospel. The church is the embodiment of the Kingdom on earth and we wait for its full consummation at the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

XIX. Glorification

We believe that glorification is the final step in the application of redemption. When a person dies their body returns to dust, but their spirit returns immediately to God – the righteous remain with God while the wicked go immediately to eternal punishment. When Christ returns, He will raise from the dead the bodies of all believers for all time who have died, and reunite them with their souls, and change the bodies of all believers who remain alive, into perfect resurrected bodies.

XX. The Judgement

We believe that at the end of the age God has appointed a day of final judgement where all believers and unbelievers will stand before the judgement seat of Christ in resurrected bodies and hear His proclamation of their eternal destiny. The wicked will go into everlasting punishment in hell and the righteous into everlasting life to live eternally with God in new heavens and a new earth.