

The Triune God

There is one true and living God who is a spirit, infinite, eternal, independent, unchanging, almighty, and perfect in his being, holiness, wisdom, power, justice, goodness, truth, and love. This one God exists in three equally divine Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who know, love, and glorify one another. The Triune God is the Creator of all things and is worthy to receive all glory and adoration.

Matthew 28:19; Luke 1:37; John 1:1,3; 4:24; Romans 1:19-20; II Corinthians 13:14; Ephesians 4:5-6; Genesis 1:1,26; Deuteronomy 6:4

Revelation

God graciously makes known His existence and power in the created order, has supremely revealed Himself to fallen human beings in the person of His Son, and by His Spirit has disclosed Himself in the Holy Scriptures, the 39 books of the Hebrew Scriptures and the 27 books of the New Testament, which are both record and means of His saving work in the world. These writings alone constitute the verbally and fully inspired Word of God, which is utterly authoritative and without error in the original writings, complete in its revelation of God's will for salvation, sufficient for all that God requires us to believe and do, and final in its authority over every domain of knowledge to which it speaks. The Scriptures must not be added to, superseded, or changed by later tradition, extra-biblical revelation, or worldly wisdom. Each book is to be interpreted according to its context and purpose and in reverent obedience to the Lord who speaks through it in living power.

We confess that both our finitude and our sinfulness preclude the possibility of knowing God's truth exhaustively, but we affirm that, enlightened by the Spirit of God, we can know God's revealed truth truly. The Bible is to be believed, as God's instruction, in all that it teaches; obeyed, as God's command, in all that it requires; and trusted, as God's pledge, in all that it promises. As God's people hear, believe, and do the Word, they are equipped as disciples of Christ and witnesses to the gospel.

Matthew 5:18; Mark 13:31; John 8:31-32; 16:12-13; 20:31; Acts 20:32; Romans 1:19-20; I Corinthians 2:7-14; II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:20-21; Psalm 19:1-2,7-11

God the Father

God the Father is the Creator of heaven and earth. By His Word and for His glory, He freely and supernaturally created the universe out of nothing. Through the same Word He sustains and sovereignly rules over all things. He perfectly and exhaustively knows the end from the beginning and His plans and purposes cannot be thwarted. He is faithful to every promise, works all things together for good to those who love Him, and providentially brings about His eternal good purposes to redeem us for Himself and restore His fallen creation, to the praise of His glorious grace.

Matthew 5:45; 23:9; Luke 10:21-22; John 3:16; 6:27; Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:9-11; I Timothy 1:1-2; 2:5; I Peter 1:3; Revelation 1:6; Genesis 1:1; Job 1:21; 42:2; Isaiah 43:7; 46:9-10; 48:11; Daniel 4:35

Jesus Christ

Moved by love and in obedience to His Father, the eternal Son became human without ceasing to be God through His virgin conception by the Holy Spirit, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful man. He is perfect in nature, teaching, and obedience to His heavenly Father and is utterly without sin.

By His incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and ascension, Jesus Christ acted as our representative and substitute. By His sacrificial death in our place, He revealed divine love and upheld divine justice: bearing sin, canceling debt, removing guilt, satisfying God's wrath, and reconciling to God all those who believe. By His literal, bodily resurrection from the dead, He accomplished victory over death and the powers of darkness and brought everlasting life to His people. He ascended into heaven where, at God's right hand, He intercedes for His people and rules as Lord over all. He is the promised Messiah of Israel and Head of His body, the church. He should be adored, loved, served, and obeyed by all. Jesus is coming again to judge the living and the dead.

Matthew 1:18,20-23; 20:28; Luke 1:26-27,30-35,37; John 1:1-4,14; 5:30; 6:38; 20:28,30-31; Acts 1:9-11; Romans 3:24; 5:6,8; 6:9-10; 8:34,38-39; 9:5; 14:9; II Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 1:3-10; Colossians 1:15-20; 2:13-15; I Timothy 2:5; II Timothy 4:1; Hebrews 7:25-27; 9:24,28; 10:12-14; I Peter 1:3; 2:21-24; 4:5; I John 2:1-2

The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is a divine person who glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ, convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and by His powerful and mysterious work regenerates spiritually dead sinners, awakening them to repentance and faith, baptizing them into union with the Lord Jesus, such that they are justified before God by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone. By the Spirit's agency, believers are renewed, sanctified, adopted into God's family, and receive His sovereignly distributed gifts. The Holy Spirit is Himself the down payment of the promised inheritance, and in this age indwells, guides, instructs, equips, revives, and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service. He is to be respected, honored, and worshipped as God.

John 14:16-17,26; 15:26-27; 16:7-14; Acts 1:5,8; 2:17-20; Romans 8:9-11; I Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; 12:4-13; II Corinthians 3:6; Galatians 5:16-18,22-23,25; Ephesians 1:13-14; 5:18; Hebrews 10:15

The Creation and Fall of Humanity

God created human beings, male and female, in His own image. Adam and Eve were declared to be very good, created to glorify God by enjoying Him forever, and to serve as God's agents in caring for, managing, and governing creation. Adam, made in the image of God, distorted that image and forfeited his original blessedness for himself and all his progeny by falling into sin and rebelling against God through Satan's temptation. Being estranged from his Maker yet responsible to Him, he incurred the penalty of spiritual, physical, and eternal death, became subject to divine wrath, became inherently corrupt, and, apart from a special work of God's grace, became utterly incapable of choosing or doing that which is acceptable to God. All of humanity is thus sinful by nature, by choice, and by divine declaration. This depravity is radical and pervasive, extending to his body, mind, will, emotions, and affections. Unregenerate man lives under the dominion of sin and Satan. He is at enmity with God, hostile toward God, and hateful of God. Fallen, sinful people, whatever their character or attainments, are lost and without hope apart from salvation in Christ alone.

Genesis 1:26-31; 2:7,15-25; 3:1-13,15-24; 5:1-2; Romans 3:9-18,23; 5:10,12,15-19; 6:23; I Corinthians 2:14; Ephesians 2:1-3; Colossians 1:16,21; James 3:9; I John 1:8,10; Revelation 4:11; Psalm 14:1-3; 139:13-14; Ecclesiastes 2:11; Isaiah 43:7; Jeremiah 17:9

The Salvation of Humanity

Anyone who repents of sin and trusts in Christ and His substitutionary death is declared righteous by God and receives the gift of eternal life. He is forgiven the debt of his sin, the righteousness of Christ is imputed to him, he is fully reconciled to and accepted by God, he is adopted into God's family, and, as a new creation, he is liberated from the law of sin and death into the freedom of God's Spirit. Salvation is provided by grace alone, through faith alone, because of Christ alone, for the glory of God alone.

Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God and man. There is no other name by which we must be saved. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the infinite privilege that redeemed sinners have of glorifying God because of what He has accomplished is central to the Christian faith. All that takes place in our hearts, churches, and ministries should therefore proceed from and be related to this gospel.

John 1:12-13; 3:14-16,36; 5:24; 6:40; 8:12; 10:26-28; Acts 4:12; Romans 3:24-26; 4:5; 5:6,8-11,18-19; 8:1-4,11,33; 9:22-23; I Corinthians 15:1-6,14; II Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:4-9; Colossians 1:20,22; 2:13-15; I Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 7:25-27; 9:26; 10:14; I Peter 1:3; 2:22-25; I John 1:9; Genesis 3:15; Proverbs 28:13; Isaiah 53:4-11

Sanctification

Those who have been saved by the grace of God through the regeneration of the Holy Spirit and union with Christ have awakened within them a desire to glorify, trust, and obey God. The Holy Spirit is the active agent in our sanctification and seeks to produce His fruit in us as our minds are renewed and we are conformed to the image of Christ. Though indwelling sin remains a reality, as we are led by the Spirit, we grow in the knowledge of the Lord, holding fast to the truth, hope, and power of the gospel, freely keeping His commandments, and endeavoring to so live in the world that all people may see our good works and glorify our Father who is in heaven. We persevere in faith and in service together because God preserves His children forever. This motivates us toward joy, away from self-righteousness, and into the fruit-bearing ministry to which God calls us.

John 6:37-40; 10:27-29; Romans 8:2,4-6,13,26,38-39; 13:13-14; I Corinthians 1:4-9; II Corinthians 3:18; 4:6; 5:14-15; Galatians 5:13,16-25; Colossians 1:21-23; James 1:12; I Peter 1:4-5; 2:21; 1 John 1:7; Titus 2:11-14

Ministry & Mission

Good works constitute indispensable evidence of God's saving grace. Living as salt in a world that is decaying and light in a world that is dark, believers should neither withdraw into seclusion from the world nor become indistinguishable from it. Recognizing whose created order this is, and because we are citizens of God's kingdom, we are to proclaim the gospel with words and the witness of a transformed life, love our neighbors as ourselves, and do good to all, especially those who belong to the household of God. We are motivated not by a desire to earn God's favor nor by legalism, but by joy and the sure promise of God's continued grace.

God sovereignly bestows spiritual gifts upon His children for Christian ministry and mission. It is the privilege and responsibility of every believer to minister according to the gifts and grace of God given to him, so we live dependently on one another as the Body of Christ, encouraging and expecting each member to employ his or her gifts to the glory of God, thus contributing to the beauty, vitality, and unity of the church and the work of gospel ministry throughout the world.

Matthew 28:18-20; John 15:7; Acts 1:8; 2:42; Romans 12:1-8; I Corinthians 3:6-7; 12:7,11-13; Galatians 2:14; Ephesians 2:18-22; 4:7-8; Hebrews 10:23-25; I Peter 2:5,9-12; 4:10-11; I John 5:14-15

The Church

God by His Word and Spirit creates one new humanity, the church, by calling sinful people out of the whole human race into the fellowship of Christ's Body. This universal church is manifest in local churches of which Christ is the only Head. Thus each local church is, in fact, the church, the household of God, the assembly of the living God, and the pillar and foundation of the truth. The church is not a religious institution or denomination. Rather, the church universal is made up of those who have personally appropriated the gospel and have become genuine followers of Jesus Christ. Each local church is to be free of any worldly external authority and control.

By the same Word and Spirit, God guides and preserves His new covenant community, distinguishing her from the world by her gospel message, her sacred ordinances, her discipline, her great mission, and, above all, by her love for God and her members' love for one another and for the world. The church is the corporate dwelling place of God's Spirit and the continuing witness to God in the world.

Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; 14:27; 20:28; I Corinthians 1:10; 3:9,16; 5:4-7,13-14; 12:12-14; II Corinthians 8:23; 11:2; Ephesians 1:22-23; 3:10,21; 5:19-21,25-27,29-30; Colossians 1:18; I Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 2:5,9-10; 5:1-5; Revelation 21:9-11

Baptism and the Lord's Supper

The Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church to be observed and carried out until His return: baptism and the Lord's Supper. Both are intended only for the individual who has received the saving benefits of Christ's atoning work and become His disciple.

In obedience to Christ's command and as a testimony to God, oneself, the church, and the world, a believer should be immersed in water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Water baptism is a visual and symbolic demonstration of a person's faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior and its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to new life. It signifies entrance into the new covenant community and is therefore a pre-requisite to the privileges that come with membership in a local church.

The Lord's Supper symbolizes the breaking of Christ's body and the shedding of His blood on our behalf, and is to be observed repeatedly throughout the Christian life as a sign of continued participation in the atoning benefits of Christ's death as well as ongoing relation to the new covenant community. As we partake of the Lord's Supper with an attitude of faith and self-examination, we remember and proclaim the death of Christ, receive spiritual nourishment for our souls, and signify our unity with other members of Christ's body.

Matthew 26:26-28; 28:18-20; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:17-20; Acts 2:41-42; 18:8; Romans 6:3-5; I Corinthians 11:23-29; 12:13; Ephesians 4:5; Colossians 2:12

The Consummation of All Things

The consummation of all things includes the future, physical, visible, personal, and glorious return of Jesus Christ, the bodily resurrection of the dead and the translation of those alive in Christ, the judgment of the just and the unjust, and the fulfillment of Christ's kingdom in the new heavens and the new earth. In the consummation, Satan with his hosts and all those outside Christ are finally and eternally separated from the benevolent presence of God, enduring eternal punishment, but the righteous, in glorious bodies, shall live and reign with God forever, serving Him and giving Him unending praise and glory. On that day the church will be presented faultless before God by the obedience, suffering, and triumph of Christ, and all sin and its effects will be forever banished. Then shall the eager expectation of creation be fulfilled and the whole earth shall proclaim the glory of God who makes all things new.

Matthew 16:27; Mark 14:62; John 14:3; Acts 1:11; I Corinthians 4:5; 15:12-28,42-55; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:13; I Thessalonians 1:10; 4:13-18; 5:9-10; II Thessalonians 1:7-10; II Timothy 4:1; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; Revelation 19:11-16; 20:1-6,10-15; 21:1-8,22-22:5