

# Reformation Christian Fellowship

## Statement of Faith

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### The Scriptures

The Bible, consisting of 39 Old Testament books and 27 New Testament books, is the only infallible rule of faith and practice. The Bible is “God-breathed”. God inspired human authors to write his Word. He did this by working through the authors’ personalities and circumstances. God inspired every word of the Bible. The Bible is inerrant in the original manuscripts. It is completely truthful since God is the ultimate author of the Bible and He is truthful. The Bible is clear in its message. Although some passages are hard to understand, the teaching of the Bible, through the power of the Holy Spirit, is understandable to those who desire to know and obey God. Disagreements over biblical passages are not due to problems with the Bible but due to problems with the interpreters. The Bible reveals all we need to in order to know, trust, and obey God. Nothing is to be added or taken away from the Bible. God does not lead or teach his people contrary to Scripture.

1. The Bible is “God-breathed”. God inspired human authors to write his Word. He did this by working through the authors’ personalities and circumstances. God inspired every word of the Bible.
  - a. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17 ESV<sup>1</sup>)
  - b. knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. (2 Peter 1:20-21 ESV)
  - c. But he answered, “It is written, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.” (Matthew 4:4 ESV)
2. The Bible is inerrant in the original manuscripts. It is completely truthful since God is the ultimate author of the Bible and He is truthful.
  - a. in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began (Titus 1:2 ESV)
  - b. And now, O Lord GOD, you are God, and your words are true, and you have promised this good thing to your servant. (2 Samuel 7:28 ESV)
  - c. Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him. (Proverbs 30:5 ESV)
3. The Bible is clear in its message. Although some passages are hard to understand, the teaching of the Bible, through the power of the Holy Spirit, is understandable to those who desire to know and obey God. Disagreements over biblical passages are not due to problems with the Bible but due to problems with the interpreters.
  - a. Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything. (2 Timothy 2:7 ESV)
  - b. The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; (Psalm 19:7 ESV)
  - c. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. (Deuteronomy 6:6-7 ESV)

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4. The Bible reveals all we need to in order to truly know God. What God reveals through Scripture is sufficient for knowing, trusting, and obeying God. Nothing is to be added or taken away from the Bible. God does not lead or teach his people contrary to Scripture.
  - a. But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:14-17 ESV)
  - b. You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God that I command you. (Deuteronomy 4:2 ESV)
  - c. I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book. (Revelation 22:18-19 ESV)
  - d. The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law. (Deuteronomy 29:29 ESV)
  - e. Do not despise prophecies, but test everything; hold fast what is good. (1 Thessalonians 5:20-21 ESV)
  - f. Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. (1 John 4:1 ESV)

## God

There is one living and true God who is most holy, self-existent, self-sufficient, unchangeable, all knowing (omniscient), all powerful (omnipotent), sovereign, has no beginning and no end (eternal), and is present everywhere (omnipresent).

1. God is the only God, and God is one.
  - a. Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. (Deuteronomy 6:4 ESV)
  - b. I am the LORD, and there is no other, besides me there is no God; (Isaiah 45:5a ESV)
  - c. Therefore, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that “an idol has no real existence,” and that “there is no God but one.” (1 Corinthians 8:4 ESV)
2. God is most holy.
3. For I am the Lord your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy (Leviticus 11:44 ESV)
4. Exalt the Lord our God, and worship at his holy mountain; for the Lord our God is holy (Psalm 99:9 ESV)
5. There is none holy like the Lord: for there is none besides you; there is no rock like our God (1 Samuel 2:2 ESV)
6. And one called to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory (Isaiah 6:3 ESV)
7. And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like an eagle in flight. And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come (Revelation 4:6-8 ESV)
8. God is self-existent, self-sufficient, and eternal.
  - a. The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though

- he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. (Acts 17:24-25 ESV)
- b. God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" (Exodus 3:14 ESV)
  - c. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. (Psalm 90:2 ESV)
9. God does not change his being, purposes, or promises.
    - a. For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed. (Malachi 3:6 ESV)
    - b. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. (James 1:17 ESV)
    - c. The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of his heart to all generations. (Psalm 33:11 ESV)
    - d. For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. (Romans 11:29 ESV)
    - e. And also the Glory of Israel will not lie or have regret, for he is not a man, that he should have regret. (1 Samuel 15:29 ESV)
  10. God is always truly present everywhere and knows all – present, past, and future.
    - a. "Am I a God at hand, declares the LORD, and not a God far away? Can a man hide himself in secret places so that I cannot see him? declares the LORD. Do I not fill heaven and earth? declares the LORD." (Jeremiah 23:23-24 ESV)
    - b. Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me. (Psalm 139:7-10 ESV)
    - c. for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything. (1 John 3:20 ESV)
    - d. And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account. (Hebrews 4:13 ESV)
    - e. O LORD, you have searched me and known me! You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O LORD, you know it altogether. (Psalm 139:1-4 ESV)
    - f. Do you know the balancings of the clouds, the wondrous works of him who is perfect in knowledge (Job 37:16 ESV)
  11. God does everything he wills to do.
    - a. Remember this and stand firm, recall it to mind, you transgressors, remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose,' calling a bird of prey from the east, the man of my counsel from a far country. I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass; I have purposed, and I will do it. (Isaiah 46:8-11 ESV)
    - b. The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; he frustrates the plans of the peoples. The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of his heart to all generations. (Psalm 33:10-11 ESV)
    - c. And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. (Matthew 28:18 ESV)
    - d. Then Job answered the Lord and said: "I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted." (Job 42:1-2 ESV)
  12. God is the absolute ruler and has total control over all that happens, including evil, but is in no respect the author of sin.
    - a. At the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored him who lives forever, for his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation; all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the

- inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, “What have you done?”(Daniel 4:34-35 ESV)
- b. The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD. (Proverbs 16:33 ESV)
  - c. The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the LORD; he turns it wherever he will. (Proverbs 21:1 ESV)
  - d. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. (Matthew 10:29 ESV)
  - e. And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, (Acts 17:26 ESV)
  - f. In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, (Ephesians 1:11 ESV)
  - g. which he will display at the proper time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, (1 Timothy 6:15 ESV)
  - h. I form light and create darkness, I make well-being and create calamity, I am the Lord, who does all these things. (Isaiah 45:7 ESV)
  - i. See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god beside me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand. (Deuteronomy 32:39 ESV)
  - j. The Lord has made everything for its purpose, even the wicked for the day of trouble. (Proverbs 16:4 ESV)
  - k. Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God,” for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. (James 1:13 ESV)

## The Trinity

The only true God eternally exists in three persons, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit – the Trinity. Each person of the Trinity is truly God with the same divine nature, but the persons of the Trinity are not identical. Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, is truly divine. The Holy Spirit is truly God and not an impersonal force.

1. Each person of the Trinity is truly and completely God with the same divine nature, but the persons of the Trinity are not identical.
  - a. Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” (Genesis 1:26a ESV)
  - b. And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” (Isaiah 6:8a ESV)
  - c. The LORD says to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.” (Psalm 110:1 ESV)
  - d. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (Matthew 28:19 ESV)
  - e. To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen. (Romans 9:5 ESV)
  - f. waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, (Titus 2:13 ESV)
  - g. And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.” (Matthew 3:16-17 ESV)
2. Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, is truly divine.
  - a. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (John 1:1 ESV)
  - b. Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” (John 20:28 ESV)

- c. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. (Hebrews 1:3a ESV)
  - d. But of the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom. (Hebrews 1:8 ESV)
3. The Holy Spirit is truly God and not an impersonal force.
- a. And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. (2 Corinthians 3:18 ESV)
  - b. But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God." (Acts 5:3-4 ESV)
  - c. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. (Ephesians 4:30 ESV)

## Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, being truly divine became man without ceasing to be God. The divine and human natures of Jesus Christ are distinct but united in one person. Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He was tempted as we are but lived a sinless life. Jesus was crucified for our sin, buried, and raised from the dead. He ascended to the Father and now rules over all and makes intercession to the Father for his people. Jesus is the head of the body, the church, and He will return in glory to judge the living and the dead and usher in the final glorious state. He is the ultimate prophet, priest, and king, the supreme fulfillment of all the covenants revealed in Scripture, and the final expression of Old Testament prophecies, types, and shadows.

1. Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, being truly divine became man without ceasing to be God. The divine and human natures of Jesus Christ are distinct but united in one person.
  - a. But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, (Galatians 4:4 ESV)
  - b. See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have. (Luke 24:39 ESV)
  - c. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, (1 Timothy 2:5 ESV)
  - d. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6 ESV)
  - e. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:14 ESV)
  - f. concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, (Romans 1:3-4 ESV)
  - g. Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. (Hebrews 2:17 ESV)
2. Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.
  - a. Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. (Isaiah 7:14 ESV)
  - b. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus." (Luke 1:30-31 ESV)
  - c. And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High

- will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.” (Luke 1:34-35 ESV)
- d. Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.” (Matthew 1:18-20 ESV)
3. Jesus Christ was tempted as we are but lived a sinless life.
    - a. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. (Hebrews 4:15 ESV)
    - b. Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. (Matthew 4:1 ESV)
    - c. For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. (Hebrews 7:26 ESV)
    - d. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. (1 Peter 2:22 ESV)
    - e. You know that he appeared to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. (1 John 3:5 ESV)
    - f. Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, “I find no guilt in this man.” (Luke 23:4 ESV)
  4. Jesus was crucified for our sin, buried, and raised from the dead three days later.
    - a. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, (1 Corinthians 15:3-4 ESV)
    - b. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, (Galatians 1:3-4 ESV)
    - c. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. (1 Peter 2:24 ESV)
    - d. So he delivered him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus, and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them. (John 19:16-18 ESV)
    - e. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. So because of the Jewish day of Preparation, since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there. (John 19:41-42 ESV)
    - f. For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. (Matthew 12:40 ESV)
    - g. But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. (Matthew 28:5-6 ESV)
    - h. “Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses.” (Acts 2:29-32 ESV)
  5. After he rose from the dead Jesus ascended to the Father and now rules over all and makes intercession to the Father for his people.

- a. In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. (Acts 1:1-2 ESV)
  - b. And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. (Acts 1:9 ESV)
  - c. So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. (Mark 16:19 ESV)
  - d. Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him. (1 Peter 3:21-22 ESV)
  - e. For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority. (Colossians 2:9-10 ESV)
  - f. that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. (Ephesians 1:20-21 ESV)
  - g. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. (Romans 8:34 ESV)
  - h. Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. (Hebrews 7:25 ESV)
  - i. For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. (Hebrews 9:24 ESV)
  - j. My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. (1 John 2:1 ESV)
6. Jesus is the head of the body, the church.
- a. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. (Ephesians 5:23 ESV)
  - b. And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all. (Ephesians 1:22-23 ESV)
  - c. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. (Colossians 1:18 ESV)
  - d. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. (1 Corinthians 12:27 ESV)
7. Jesus will return in glory to judge the living and the dead and usher in the final glorious state.
- a. When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. (Matthew 25:31-32 ESV)
  - b. Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment. (John 5:28-29 ESV)
  - c. Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. (Revelation 20:11-12 ESV)
  - d. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness,

waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. (2 Peter 3:10-13 ESV)

- e. And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." (Revelation 21:5a ESV)
  - f. Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For "God has put all things in subjection under his feet." But when it says, "all things are put in subjection," it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him. When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all. (1 Corinthians 15:24-28 ESV)
8. He is the ultimate prophet, priest, and king, the supreme fulfillment of all the covenants revealed in Scripture, and the final expression of Old Testament prophecies, types, and shadows.
- a. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him. (Deuteronomy 18:18-19 ESV)
  - b. When the people saw the sign that he had done, they said, "This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!" (John 6:14 ESV)
  - c. Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. (Hebrews 1:1-2 ESV)
  - d. Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, a minister in the holy places, in the true tent that the Lord set up, not man. (Hebrews 8:1-2 ESV)
  - e. But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. (Hebrews 9:11-12 ESV)
  - f. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this. (Isaiah 9:6-7 ESV)
  - g. Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. (Acts 2:29-33 ESV)
  - h. They will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful. (Revelation 17:14 ESV)
  - i. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise. (Galatians 3:29 ESV)
  - j. Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. (Jeremiah 31:31 ESV)



- k. And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood." (Luke 22:20 ESV)
- l. Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. (Matthew 5:17 ESV)
- m. Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." (Luke 24:44 ESV)
- n. Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory and spoke of him. (John 12:41 ESV)
- o. For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory. (2 Corinthians 1:20 ESV)

## Creation

God created the world in six days out of nothing by the power of his word. The creation demonstrates God's eternal power, divine nature, and glory, and is in no respect compatible with any theory of macro evolution. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit participated in creation. The crown of his creation was man, who was created in God's image. God created man male and female.

1. God created the world in six days out of nothing by the power of his word.
  - a. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. (Genesis 1:1 ESV)
  - b. And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day. Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. (Genesis 1:31-2:2 ESV)
  - c. By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host. (Psalm 33:6 ESV)
  - d. By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible. (Hebrews 11:3 ESV)
  - e. For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God (2 Peter 3:5 ESV)
  - f. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. (Genesis 1:3 ESV) (See also Genesis 1:6-7, 9, 11, 14-15, 20-21, and 24.)
2. The creation demonstrates God's eternal power, divine nature, and glory, and is in no respect compatible with any theory of macro evolution.
  - a. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. (Psalm 19:1 ESV)
  - b. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. (Romans 1:19-20 ESV)
  - c. Yet he did not leave himself without witness, for he did good by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness. (Acts 14:17 ESV)
  - d. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit participated in creation.
  - e. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. (Genesis 1:1-2 ESV)
  - f. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. (John 1:1-3 ESV)
  - g. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or

dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. (Colossians 1:15-16 ESV)

3. The crown of God's creation was man, who was created in God's image. God created man male and female.
  - a. Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." (Genesis 1:26-28 ESV)
  - b. "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image. (Genesis 9:6 ESV)
  - c. With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. (James 3:9 ESV)

## Man

God created man, male and female, in his image. Adam was the first human and the first male created by God, and the first female was Eve, created by God from Adam. A person's gender, male or female, is determined by God and is not determined by desire, feeling, or a decision of the will. A biological male is referred to as a man, and a biological female is referred to as a woman. Marriage was created by God for men and women and is an exclusive relationship in which one man and one woman commit themselves to each other in covenant for life. Husband and wife become "one flesh". Marriage is for believers and non-believers, but a believer should only marry another believer. Christ's relationship to the church explains Christian marriage. The husband is to love, lead, and protect his wife, and the wife is to respect and submit to her husband. The differing roles do not mean that the wife is inferior to the husband since both are made in God's image and Christ died for both. God made provisions for divorce because of sin, but these provisions for divorce are just that, provisions, and not commands. Reconciliation is always preferable. God made man, male and female, as sexual beings for the purpose of mutual enjoyment and procreation. However, sexual activity should only occur between a man and a woman and only within marriage. A sexual relationship between a man and a man or a woman and a woman is sinful. Also, in God's sight there is no such thing as marriage between a man and a man or a woman and a woman. Children result from the sexual activity of a man and a woman and are gifts from the Lord. While children are sinful from the moment of conception, they also have God's image from conception and should be protected from harm. Abortion at any stage of pregnancy is the killing of a human being created in God's image.

1. God created man, male and female, in his image. Adam was the first human and the first male created by God, and the first female was Eve, created by God from Adam. A person's gender, male or female, is determined by God and is not determined by desire, feeling, or a decision of the will. A biological male is referred to as a man, and a biological female is referred to as a woman.
  - a. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. (Genesis 1:27 ESV)
  - b. When no bush of the field was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground, and a mist was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground—then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. (Genesis 2:5–7 ESV)
  - c. The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs

and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said,  
 “This at last is bone of my bones  
 and flesh of my flesh;  
 she shall be called Woman,  
 because she was taken out of Man.” (Genesis 2:20–23 ESV)

- d. The man called his wife’s name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. (Genesis 3:20 ESV)
2. Marriage was created by God for men and women and is an exclusive relationship in which one man and one woman commit themselves to each other in covenant for life. Husband and wife become “one flesh”.
  - a. Then the man said, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.” Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. (Genesis 2:23-24 ESV)
  - b. He answered, “Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.” (Matthew 19:4-6 ESV)
  - c. Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. (Ephesians 5:31 ESV)
  - d. For a married woman is bound by law to her husband while he lives, but if her husband dies she is released from the law of marriage. Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law, and if she marries another man she is not an adulteress. (Romans 7:2-3 ESV)
3. Marriage is for believers and non-believers, but a believer should only marry another believer.
  - a. A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord. (1 Corinthians 7:39 ESV)
  - b. Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? (2 Corinthians 6:14 ESV)
  - c. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.” Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. (Genesis 2:22-24 ESV)
  - d. Jesus said to her, “Go, call your husband, and come here.” The woman answered him, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “You are right in saying, ‘I have no husband’; for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true.” (John 4:16-18 ESV)
4. Christ’s relationship to the church explains Christian marriage. The husband is to love, lead, and protect his wife, and the wife is to respect and submit to her husband. The differing roles do not mean that the wife is inferior to the husband since both are made in God’s image and Christ died for both.
  - a. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body.

“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. (Ephesians 5:22-33 ESV)

- b. Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them. (Colossians 3:18-19 ESV)
  - c. Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, when they see your respectful and pure conduct. Do not let your adorning be external—the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear— but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious. For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are her children, if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening. Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered. (1 Peter 3:1-7 ESV)
5. God made provisions for divorce because of sin, but these provisions for divorce are just that, provisions, and not commands. Reconciliation is always preferable.
- a. But you say, “Why does he not?” Because the LORD was witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth. “For the man who does not love his wife but divorces her, says the LORD, the God of Israel, covers his garment with violence, says the LORD of hosts. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be faithless.” (Malachi 2:14-16 ESV)
  - b. They said to him, “Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce and to send her away?” He said to them, “Because of your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. (Matthew 19:7-8 ESV)
  - c. “It was also said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’ But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery. (Matthew 5:31-32 ESV)
  - d. To the married I give this charge (not I, but the Lord): the wife should not separate from her husband (but if she does, she should remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband), and the husband should not divorce his wife. To the rest I say (I, not the Lord) that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her. If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband is made holy because of his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy because of her husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy. But if the unbelieving partner separates, let it be so. In such cases the brother or sister is not enslaved. God has called you to peace. For how do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife? (1 Corinthians 7:10-16 ESV)
6. God made man, male and female, as sexual beings for the purpose of mutual enjoyment and procreation. However, sexual activity should only occur between a man and a woman and only within marriage.
- a. Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. (Genesis 2:24-25 ESV)
  - b. And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. (Genesis 9:1 ESV)

- c. Now concerning the matters about which you wrote: "It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman." But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. (1 Corinthians 7:1-5 ESV)
  - d. To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is good for them to remain single as I am. But if they cannot exercise self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion. (1 Corinthians 7:8-9 ESV)
  - e. Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality (1 Corinthians 6:9 ESV)
  - f. For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. (Ephesians 5:5 ESV)
  - g. Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous. (Hebrews 13:4 ESV)
7. A sexual relationship between a man and a man or a woman and a woman is sinful. Also, in God's sight there is no such thing as marriage between a man and a man or a woman and a woman.
- a. You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination. (Leviticus 18:22 ESV)
  - b. For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error. (Romans 1:26–27 ESV)
  - c. Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. (1 Corinthians 6:9–10 ESV)
  - d. Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. (Genesis 2:24 ESV)
8. Children result from the sexual activity of a man and a woman and are gifts from the Lord. While children are sinful from the moment of conception, they also have God's image from conception and should be protected from harm. Abortion at any stage of pregnancy is the killing of a human being created in God's image.
- a. Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, "I have gotten a man with the help of the LORD." (Genesis 4:1 ESV)
  - b. And when Esau lifted up his eyes and saw the women and children, he said, "Who are these with you?" Jacob said, "The children whom God has graciously given your servant." (Genesis 33:5 ESV)
  - c. Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD,  
the fruit of the womb a reward.  
Like arrows in the hand of a warrior  
are the children of one's youth.  
Blessed is the man  
who fills his quiver with them!  
He shall not be put to shame  
when he speaks with his enemies in the gate. (Psalm 127:3–5 ESV)
  - d. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,  
and in sin did my mother conceive me. (Psalm 51:5 ESV)

- e. What is man, that he can be pure?  
Or he who is born of a woman, that he can be righteous? (Job 15:14 ESV)
- f. For you formed my inward parts;  
you knitted me together in my mother's womb.  
I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.  
Wonderful are your works;  
my soul knows it very well. (Psalm 139:13–14 ESV)
- g. You clothed me with skin and flesh,  
and knit me together with bones and sinews.  
You have granted me life and steadfast love,  
and your care has preserved my spirit. (Job 10:11–12 ESV)
- h. You shall not murder. (Exodus 20:13 ESV)

## The Fall

At creation God established a covenant with Adam and his posterity. The Covenant of Works (or Covenant of Creation) required complete obedience. When tempted by Satan Adam and Eve disobeyed and rebelled against God. Because Adam represented all mankind, the results of his sin, his guilt, his sinful nature, and death, are passed on to all his descendants, except for Christ. Being estranged from his Creator, yet responsible to him, man became subject to divine wrath, inwardly depraved and, apart from a special work of grace, incapable of returning to God. This depravity is radical and pervasive. It extends to his mind, will 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. After Adam transgressed the Covenant of Works God established the Covenant of Grace. The Covenant of Grace is demonstrated by God's care for his creatures, even though they are in rebellion against him, and his provision of salvation through the last Adam, Jesus Christ.

1. At creation God established a covenant with Adam and his posterity. The Covenant of Works (or Creation) required complete obedience.
  - a. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." (Genesis 2:16-17 ESV)
  - b. But like Adam they transgressed the covenant; there they dealt faithlessly with me. (Hosea 6:7 ESV)
  - c. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come. (Romans 5:14 ESV)
2. Adam, being man's representative, along with Eve, disobeyed and rebelled against God when tempted by Satan in the form of a serpent. This subjected all men to physical and spiritual death.
  - a. Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. (Genesis 3:1-6 ESV)
  - b. Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned (Romans 5:12 ESV)

- c. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. (1 Corinthians 15:21-22 ESV)
  - d. Behold, all souls are mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is mine: the soul who sins shall die. (Ezekiel 18:4 ESV)
- 3. Being estranged from his Creator, yet responsible to him, man became subject to divine wrath, inwardly depraved and, apart from a special work of grace, incapable of returning to God. This depravity is radical and pervasive. It extends to his mind, will and affections.
  - a. The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. (Genesis 6:5 ESV)
  - b. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. (Psalm 51:5 ESV)
  - c. Enter not into judgment with your servant, for no one living is righteous before you. (Psalm 143:2 ESV)
  - d. Surely there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins. (Ecclesiastes 7:20 ESV)
  - e. What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one." (Romans 3:9-12 ESV)
  - f. And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. (Ephesians 2:1-3 ESV)
  - g. No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. (John 6:44 ESV)
  - h. And he said, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father." (John 6:65 ESV)
- 4. 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.
  - a. We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. (1 John 5:19 ESV)
  - b. You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. (John 8:44 ESV)
  - c. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. (1 John 3:8 ESV)
  - d. They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Though they know God's decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them. (Romans 1:29-32 ESV)
  - e. The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. (1 Corinthians 2:14 ESV)
- 5. After Adam transgressed the Covenant of Works God established the Covenant of Grace. The Covenant of Grace is demonstrated by God's care for his creatures, even though they are in rebellion against him, and his provision of salvation through the last Adam, Jesus Christ.

- a. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel. (Genesis 3:15 ESV)
- b. Then Noah built an altar to the Lord and took some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And when the Lord smelled the pleasing aroma, the Lord said in his heart, "I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done. While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease." (Genesis 8:20-22 ESV)
- c. "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust." (Matthew 5:43-45 ESV)
- d. Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed." So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. (Galatians 3:7-9 ESV)
- e. "Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jeremiah 31:31-34 ESV)
- f. Thus it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven. (1 Corinthians 15:45-49 ESV)

## Salvation

Before the creation of the world in eternity past, The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit covenanted to accomplish salvation. This covenant is called the Covenant of Redemption. Salvation, which is sovereignly administered by God, is being rescued from God's wrath and being given eternal life in Christ. The Father from all eternity chose people for eternal life. This choice was not due to any foreseen faith or merit in the chosen (elect), but only due to his mercy and good pleasure. The Father gave the elect to the Son, who accomplished redemption on their behalf. The Holy Spirit applies this redemption to the elect by regenerating unbelievers and sealing them for eternity guaranteeing their complete salvation. All who are foreknown by the Father are chosen, called, justified, and glorified. All aspects of salvation, including our faith in Christ, are gifts from God so that he receives all the glory.

1. Salvation, which is sovereignly administered by God, is being rescued from God's wrath and being given eternal life in Christ.
  - a. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. (Romans 5:9 ESV)



- b. For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come. (1 Thessalonian 1:9-10 ESV)
  - c. For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thessalonians 5:9 ESV)
  - d. Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 5:20-21 ESV)
  - e. Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. (John 5:24 ESV)
2. The Father from all eternity chose people for eternal life. This choice was not due to any foreseen faith or merit in the chosen (elect), but only due to his mercy and good pleasure.
- a. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. (Ephesians 1:3-6 ESV)
  - b. Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began (2 Timothy 1:8-9 ESV)
  - c. and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain. (Revelation 13:8 ESV)
  - d. The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to rise from the bottomless pit and go to destruction. And the dwellers on earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world will marvel to see the beast, because pit was and is not and is to come. (Revelation 17:8 ESV)
3. The Father gave the elect to the Son, who accomplished redemption on their behalf.
- a. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. (Ephesians 1:7-10 ESV)
  - b. and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus (Romans 3:24 ESV)
  - c. All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. (John 6:37-39 ESV)
  - d. Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name bear witness about me, but you do not believe because you are not among my sheep. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand." (John 10:25-29 ESV)
  - e. I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you. For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am praying for

- them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. (John 17:6-9 ESV)
4. The Holy Spirit applies this redemption to the elect by regenerating unbelievers and sealing them for eternity guaranteeing their complete salvation.
    - a. Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.” (John 3:5 ESV)
    - b. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:4-5 ESV)
    - c. In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. (Ephesians 1:13-14 ESV)
    - d. And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee. (2 Corinthians 1:21-22 ESV)
  5. All who are foreknown by the Father are chosen, called, justified, and glorified. All aspects of salvation, including our faith in Christ, are gifts from God so that he receives all the glory.
    - a. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. (Romans 8:29-30 ESV)
    - b. In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. (Ephesians 1:11-12 ESV)
    - c. And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:1-10 ESV)
    - d. For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen. (Romans 11:36 ESV)

## The Gospel

God’s justice requires the penalty of death for sin. God’s grace provides the satisfaction of that penalty for all who place their trust in Christ alone. Jesus alone can satisfy God’s wrath so he once and for all satisfied (or propitiated) God’s wrath by his death on the cross. Jesus’ death was a substitutionary atonement in that he took our sin on himself and died on our behalf. Our sin was imputed (or credited) to Christ and his righteousness is imputed to those who by faith come to Jesus. His resurrection demonstrated that his sacrifice appeased God’s holy wrath. Jesus ascended to the Father and is the only mediator between God and man. Therefore, salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the only way

to be reconciled to God. All this is good news (the gospel). The gospel demonstrates God's great love and amazing grace.

1. God's justice requires the penalty of death for sin.
  - a. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:23 ESV)
  - b. For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. (Hebrews 10:4 ESV)
  - c. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." (Genesis 2:16-17 ESV)
  - d. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. (Romans 3:26 ESV)
2. God's grace provides the satisfaction of the death penalty for all who place their trust in Christ alone.
  - a. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9 ESV)
  - b. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. (John 1:17 ESV)
  - c. But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will. (Acts 15:11 ESV)
  - d. and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, (Romans 3:24 ESV)
3. Jesus alone can satisfy God's wrath so he once and for all satisfied (or propitiated) God's wrath by his death on the cross. Jesus' death was a substitutionary atonement in that he took our sin on himself and died on our behalf. Our sin was imputed (or credited) to Christ and his righteousness is imputed to those who by faith come to Jesus.
  - a. and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. (Romans 3:24-25 ESV)
  - b. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. (1 John 2:2 ESV)
  - c. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (2 Corinthians 5:21 ESV)
  - d. For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, (1 Peter 3:18 ESV)
  - e. He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself. (Hebrews 7:27 ESV)
  - f. And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. (Hebrews 10:10 ESV)
4. Jesus' resurrection demonstrated that his sacrifice appeased God's holy wrath.
  - a. who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification. (Romans 4:25 ESV)
  - b. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. (1 Corinthians 15:17 ESV)
  - c. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. (Romans 5:10 ESV)
5. Jesus ascended to the Father and is the only mediator between God and man.
  - a. And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you

- stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.” (Acts 1:9-11 ESV)
- b. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, (1 Timothy 2:5 ESV)
  - c. Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant. (Hebrews 9:15 ESV)
  - d. For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. (Hebrews 9:24 ESV)
6. Salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the only way to be reconciled to God.
    - a. Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. (John 14:6 ESV)
    - b. And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. (Acts 4:12 ESV)
    - c. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18 ESV)
    - d. he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5 ESV)
    - e. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9 ESV)
  7. The gospel demonstrates God’s great love and amazing grace.
    - a. but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8 ESV)
    - b. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16 ESV)
    - c. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved (Ephesians 2:4-5 ESV)
    - d. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. (1 John 4:10 ESV)

## The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. He glorifies Jesus Christ and applies the work of Christ to believers. He regenerates believers in Christ, baptizes believers into the Church, indwells believers permanently, and seals believers for the day of redemption. The Holy Spirit is the active agent in our sanctification who intercedes for us when we don’t know how we ought to pray and produces His fruit in us and, through the Word of God, renews our minds, thereby conforming us to the image of Christ. Since Pentecost, the Holy Spirit empowers believers to proclaim the gospel and imparts His gifts for the edification of the Church.

1. The Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment.
  - a. And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; concerning righteousness because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. (John 16:8-11 ESV)
2. He glorifies Jesus Christ and applies the work of Christ to believers.
  - a. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare

- to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. (John 16:13-14 ESV)
- b. Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says “Jesus is accursed!” and no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except in the Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 12:3 ESV)
3. He regenerates believers in Christ, baptizes believers into the Church, indwells believers permanently, and seals believers for the day of redemption.
    - a. he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5 ESV)
    - b. Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. (John 3:5 ESV)
    - c. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. (1 Corinthians 12:13)
    - d. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. (John 14:16-17 ESV)
    - e. And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee. (2 Corinthians 1:21-22 ESV)
    - f. In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. (Ephesians 1:13-14 ESV)
  4. The Holy Spirit is the active agent in our sanctification who intercedes for us when we don’t know how we ought to pray and produces His fruit in us and, through the Word of God, renews our minds, thereby conforming us to the image of Christ.
    - a. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. (Ezekiel 36:27)
    - b. according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you. (1 Peter 1:2)
    - c. Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. (Romans 8:26 ESV)
    - d. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. (Galatians 5:22-23 ESV)
    - e. For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. (Romans 14:17 ESV)
    - f. May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope. (Romans 15:13 ESV)
    - g. I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. (Romans 12:1-2 ESV)
    - h. And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. (Romans 8:28-29 ESV)
  5. Since Pentecost, the Holy Spirit empowers believers to proclaim the gospel and imparts His gifts for the edification of the Church.

- a. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. (Acts 1:8)
- b. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit." (John 20:21-22)
- c. Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills. (1 Corinthians 12:4-7, 11 ESV)
- d. Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy. (1 Corinthians 14:1 ESV)
- e. For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; (Romans 12:4-6 ESV)
- f. What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up. If any speak in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn, and let someone interpret. But if there is no one to interpret, let each of them keep silent in church and speak to himself and to God. Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said. If a revelation is made to another sitting there, let the first be silent. For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged, and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets. For God is not a God of confusion but of peace. As in all the churches of the saints (1 Corinthians 14:26-33 ESV)
- g. But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it says, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men." (Ephesians 4:7-8 ESV)

## Sanctification

Because of our flesh sin remains a reality; however, through the spiritual disciplines of Bible study, prayer, worship, and confession, the Spirit causes us to grow in the knowledge of the Lord and in the ability to keep His commandments. This growing process will not be completed during our lifetime but will most assuredly be completed by God at the day of Christ Jesus. Because of the sure promise of God to preserve His people until the end, all true believers will persevere in the faith and endeavor to so live in the world that all people may see our good works and glorify our Father who is in heaven.

1. Because of our flesh sin remains a reality; however, as we grow in the Word and are led by the Spirit, we grow in the knowledge of the Lord, 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.
  - a. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. (1 John 1:8 ESV)
  - b. For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body. (James 3:2 ESV)
  - c. But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. (Galatians 5:16-17 ESV)
  - d. If you love me, you will keep my commandments. (John 14:15 ESV)
  - e. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. (Matthew 5:16 ESV)

- f. Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation. (1 Peter 2:12 ESV)
  2. All believers are exhorted to persevere in the faith knowing they will have to give an account to God for their every thought, word and deed. The spiritual disciplines, especially Bible study, prayer, worship and confession, are vital means of grace in this regard.
    - a. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. (Matthew 24:13 ESV)
    - b. Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling (Philippians 2:12 ESV)
    - c. Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. (2 Peter 1:10 ESV)
    - d. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil. (2 Corinthians 5:10 ESV)
    - e. Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; for it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God." So then each of us will give an account of himself to God. (Romans 14:10-12 ESV)
    - f. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17 ESV)
    - g. pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17 ESV)
    - h. Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. (James 5:16 ESV)
    - i. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth. (John 4:23-24 ESV)
  3. The believer's ultimate confidence to persevere is based in the sure promise of God to preserve His people until the end, which is most certain.
    - a. All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day." (John 6:37-40 ESV)
    - b. who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. (1 Corinthians 1:8-9 ESV)
    - c. In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. (Ephesians 1:13-14 ESV)
    - d. And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. (Philippians 1:6 ESV)
    - e. Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen. (Jude 1:24-25 ESV)
    - f. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us. (1 John 2:19 ESV)

## The Church

God by His Word and Spirit creates the Church, calling sinful men out of the whole human race into the fellowship of Christ. The Church universal is made up of those who have become genuine followers of Jesus Christ, and all members of the Church universal are to be a vital and committed part of a local church. The local church is a community of regenerated believers who confess Jesus Christ as Lord. In obedience to Scripture they organize under qualified leadership, gather regularly for preaching and worship, observe the biblical sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, are unified by the Spirit, are disciplined for holiness, and scatter to fulfill the Great Commandment and the Great Commission as missionaries to the world for God's glory and their joy. Upon conversion, newly redeemed men and women are added to a local church in which they devote themselves to teaching, fellowship, the Lord's Supper and prayer. In the context of the local church, God's people receive pastoral care and leadership and the opportunity to employ their God-given gifts in His service in relation to one another and to the world. The church is the building, body, bride, and family of Christ and the true Israel of God.

1. God by His Word and Spirit creates the Church, calling sinful men out of the whole human race into the fellowship of Christ's body.
  - a. Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. (Acts 20:28 ESV)
  - b. And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation (Revelation 5:9 ESV)
  - c. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. (1 Corinthians 1:9 ESV)
  - d. so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. (Romans 12:5 ESV)
  - e. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. (Ephesians 5:23 ESV)
  - f. This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. (Ephesians 3:6 ESV)
  - g. Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church (Colossians 1:24 ESV)
2. The Church universal is made up of those who have become genuine followers of Jesus, and all members of the Church universal are to be a vital and committed part of a local church.
  - a. And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. (John 10:16 ESV)
  - b. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. (1 Corinthians 12:13 ESV)
  - c. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call (Ephesians 4:4 ESV)
  - d. So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied. (Acts 9:31 ESV)
  - e. And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed. (Acts 14:23 ESV)
  - f. The churches of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Priscilla, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord. (1 Corinthians 16:19 ESV)
3. The local church is a community of regenerated believers who confess Jesus Christ as Lord. In obedience to Scripture they organize under qualified leadership, gather regularly for preaching and worship, observe the biblical sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, are unified by the Word and the Spirit, are disciplined for holiness, and scatter to fulfill the



Great Commandment and the Great Commission as missionaries to the world for God's glory and their joy.

- a. May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 15:5-6 ESV)
  - b. Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (Ephesians 3:20-21 ESV)
  - c. Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you. (Hebrews 13:17 ESV)
  - d. I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth. (1 Timothy 3:14-15 ESV)
  - e. Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire. (Hebrews 12:28-29 ESV)
  - f. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth. (John 4:23-24 ESV)
  - g. I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. (2 Timothy 4:1-2 ESV)
  - h. If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. (Matthew 18:15-17 ESV)
  - i. But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets." (Matthew 22:34-40 ESV)
  - j. And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20 ESV)
4. Upon conversion, newly redeemed men and women are added to a local church in which they devote themselves to teaching, fellowship, the Lord's Supper and prayer. In the context of the local church, God's people receive pastoral care and leadership and the opportunity to employ their God-given gifts in His service in relation to one another and to the world.
- a. And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. (Acts 2:42-47 ESV)

- b. So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. (1 Peter 5:1-3 ESV)
  - c. He said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep." (John 21:16 ESV)
  - d. And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:11-12 ESV)
  - e. So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith. (Galatians 6:10 ESV)
  - f. As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. (1 Peter 4:10-11 ESV)
5. The church is the building, body, bride, and family of Christ.
- a. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. (Ephesians 2:19-22 ESV)
  - b. You yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 2:5 ESV)
  - c. And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all. (Ephesians 1:22-23 ESV)
  - d. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. (Ephesians 5:29-30 ESV)
  - e. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. (Ephesians 5:25 ESV)
  - f. Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready (Revelation 19:7 ESV)
  - g. See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. (1 John 3:1-2 ESV)
  - h. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. (Romans 8:14-17 ESV)
6. The church is the true Israel of God.
- a. Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands—remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility

by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. (Ephesians 2:11-22 ESV)

- b. When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. (Ephesians 3:4-6 ESV)
- c. For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory. (2 Corinthians 1:20 ESV)
- d. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. (Ephesians 4:4-6 ESV)
- e. Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “In you shall all the nations be blessed.” So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. (Galatians 3:7-9 ESV)
- f. And as for all who walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God. (Galatians 6:16 ESV)

## Baptism and The Lord’s Supper

Water baptism is for the individual who has received the saving benefits of Christ’s atoning work and become his disciple. Therefore, in obedience to Christ’s command a believer should be baptized in water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Water baptism is a visual and symbolic demonstration of a person’s union with Christ in the likeness of His death and resurrection. It signifies that his former way of life has been put to death and depicts a person’s release from the mastery of sin. As with water baptism, the Lord’s Supper is to be observed only by those who have become genuine followers of Christ. The Lord’s Supper portrays the giving 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 we partake of the Lord’s Supper with an attitude of faith and self-examination, we receive spiritual nourishment for our souls and signify our unity with other members of Christ’s body.

1. Water baptism is for the individual who has received the saving benefits of Christ’s atoning work and become his disciple.
  - a. So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. (Acts 2:41 ESV)
  - b. But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Even Simon himself believed, and after being baptized he continued with Philip. And seeing signs and great miracles performed, he was amazed. (Acts 8:12-13 ESV)
  - c. “Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days. (Acts 10:47-48 ESV)
2. Therefore, in obedience to Christ’s command a believer should be baptized in water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

- a. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19 ESV)
  - b. Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, "See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?" And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. (Acts 8:35-38 ESV)
  - c. On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. (Acts 19:5 ESV)
3. Water baptism is a visual and symbolic demonstration of a person's union with Christ in the likeness of His death and resurrection. It signifies that his former way of life has been put to death and depicts a person's release from the mastery of sin.
  - a. What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. (Romans 6:1-4 ESV)
  - b. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. (Galatians 3:27 ESV)
  - c. In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. (Colossians 2:11-12 ESV)
4. The Lord's Supper is to be observed only by those who have become genuine followers of Christ. The Lord's Supper portrays the giving 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.
  - a. And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. (Luke 22:19-20 ESV)
  - b. The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? (1 Corinthians 10:16 ESV)
  - c. For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. (1 Corinthians 11:23-26 ESV)
5. As we partake of the Lord's Supper with an attitude of faith and self-examination, we receive spiritual nourishment for our souls and signify our unity with other members of Christ's body.
  - a. Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. (1 Corinthians 11:27-29 ESV)
  - b. Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test! (2 Corinthians 13:5 ESV)
  - c. Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread. (1 Corinthians 10:17 ESV)
  - d. On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them, intending to depart on the next day, and he prolonged his speech until midnight. (Acts 20:7 ESV)

## The Consummation

The consummation of all things includes the future, physical, visible, personal and glorious return of Jesus Christ, the 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 separated from the benevolent presence of God, enduring eternal punishment in Hell, but the righteous, in glorious bodies, shall live and reign with Him forever, serving Him and giving Him unending praise and glory. Then shall the eager expectation of creation be fulfilled, and the whole earth shall proclaim the glory of God who makes all things new.

1. The consummation of all things includes the future, physical, visible, personal and glorious return of Jesus Christ, the 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.
  - a. And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven." (Acts 1:10-11 ESV)
  - b. Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen. (Revelation 1:7 ESV)
  - c. For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done. (Matthew 16:27 ESV)
  - d. Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment. (John 5:28-29 ESV)
  - e. Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. (Revelation 20:11-13 ESV)
  - f. For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 ESV)
  - g. Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. (2 Peter 3:11-13 ESV)
  - h. Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. (Revelation 21:1 ESV)
2. In the consummation, Satan with his hosts and all those outside Christ are finally separated from the benevolent presence of God in Hell, enduring eternal punishment, but the righteous, in glorious bodies, shall live and reign with Him forever, serving Him and giving Him unending praise and glory.
  - a. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:14-15 ESV)

- b. and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. (Revelation 20:10 ESV)
  - c. And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.” (Matthew 25:46 ESV)
  - d. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all law-breakers, and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Matthew 13:41-42 ESV)
  - e. No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever. (Revelation 22:3-5 ESV)
  - f. Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. (1 Corinthians 15:51-53 ESV)
  - g. Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood. (Revelation 22:14-15 ESV)
  - h. Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. (1 John 3:2 ESV)
3. At the consummation the eager expectation of creation be fulfilled, and the whole earth shall proclaim the glory of God who makes all things new.
- a. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. (Romans 8:19-21 ESV)
  - b. whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago. (Acts 3:21 ESV)
  - c. And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” (Revelation 21:5 ESV)
  - d. For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind. (Isaiah 65:17 ESV)