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DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

The purpose of this statement is to present my main Christian doctrinal beliefs. This will include the orthodox foundations of the Christian faith, as well as evangelical and Baptist distinctives. In addition to what is described below, I am in agreement with the Baptist General Conference's "Affirmation of Faith."¹

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¹ <http://www.convergeworldwide.org/files/ww/resource/document/2012-06-30-bylaws.pdf>, article III

Revelation and Illumination

Definition, Explanation, and Argument

I believe that God has revealed Himself to all men giving them more than sufficient proof of His existence. He has done this through the wonder of all created things (Psalm 19:1-3, 8:3-4; Rom 1:18-21) and through every man's conscience by which they know their guilt and imperfection (Rom 2:14-15).

I believe that God has specially revealed Himself to and through the nation of Israel by His acts in their history (Josh 2:9-13) and His use of them as a vehicle of revelation to the world through His covenant of promise (Rom 3:2, 9:4-5; Eph 2:12; Gal 3:5-9).

I believe that God has specially revealed Himself through His Son Jesus Christ who came in human form as a personal revelation of God's character, good news of salvation, and purpose for man (John 1:1-18; Col 2:3, 9; Heb 1:1-3).

I believe that God has specially revealed Himself through the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (2 Tim 3:16, 17; 1Tim 5:18).

I believe in the illumination of the Holy Spirit. His illumination is needed to convict the unbeliever of his sin and the truth of the gospel message. His illumination is also needed by the believer for conviction of sin and growth in truth (John 16:7-11; 1Cor 2). I believe illumination is always intended to lead to repentance, growth, and application of the spiritual truths of the Scriptures to daily life (1Cor 2; 2Cor 3:14-18; Ps 119).

Inspiration and Sufficiency of Scripture

Definition

The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are inspired by the superintending work of the Holy Spirit through the "distinctive personalities and literary styles"² of their human authors in such a way that every word of the Scriptures are the very words of God in their original autographs (2Tim 3:16-17; 2Pet 1:20-21).

I also believe in the sufficiency of Scripture for life and good works so that all who believe and obey it may become thoroughly equipped for service and faithfulness to God (2Tim 3:16-17; 2Pet 1:3; Ps 1; 119; Jam 1:4).

Explanation and Argument

The Scriptures are of divine origin and did not come from human imagination (2Pet 1:20-21). This inspiration is commonly termed "verbal inspiration" and extends to the very

² "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy," in *Inerrancy*, ed. Norman Geisler (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980), Article VIII, 495.

words of Scripture. This is made clear from countless Old Testament claims that what is written and spoken are the very words of God (Ex 20:1; 31:18, 27; Num 22:38; Deut 18:18; Is 30:8-9; Jer 1:9; 30:1-2; Ezek 24:1). It is also confirmed by Jesus who speaks of “every word” of the Old Testament as coming from the “mouth of God” (Mat 4:4) and the apostles who use the “God-breathed” language in relation to “all Scripture” of the Old Testament (2Tim 3:16-17; cf. Rom 3:1-2; by implication the same inspiration is applied to all NT Scriptures). The inspiration of the NT Scriptures is promised to the apostles through the Spirit’s special work of leading them into “all truth” (John 16:12-15) and is confirmed by the apostles who speak of their writings as “Scripture” (2Pet 3:16), as coming from the Spirit (1Cor 2:13), and as “the Lord’s command” (1Cor 14:37). This teaching is confirmed from earliest Jewish and church history concerning the Old and New Testaments and is largely unquestioned as the tradition of the orthodox faith.³

Canonicity, Preservation, Authority, and Inerrancy of Scripture

Definition

I believe that the canon of Scripture as we have it in the 66 books of the Bible is the authoritative Word of God as recognized by Christ, the apostles, and the early church fathers and preserved through time by God to be consistent with the original autographs (Mat 23:35; 24:35; John 16:12-14; 1Thess 5:27; 2Pet 1:20-21; 2 Timothy 3:14-18; 2Pet 3:16-17; Ps 119:152; John 10:35-36).

I believe in the authority of the Scriptures as the foundation for all of life and the rule by which all truth it addresses is measured, as it is the only thing completely free from error and completely trustworthy in this world (2Tim 3:14-17; 2Pet 1:20-21; 1Thess 2:13; 1Cor 2:13; Titus 1:2).

I believe that the doctrine of inerrancy flows out of inspiration and because the Scriptures are the very words of an inerrant and holy God they are also without error in all that they teach and record (Ps 12:6; Pro 30:5-6; Titus 1:2). I affirm with The Chicago Statement that “it is to be believed, as God’s instruction, in all that it affirms; obeyed, as God’s command, in all that it requires; embraced, as God’s pledge, in all that it promises.”⁴

Explanation and Argument

Scripture is clear that the word of God is like refined metal which is clear of all dross and flawless (Ps 12:6; 18:30), is perfect (Ps 19:7), righteous (Ps 19:9; 119:172), true (Ps 119:151, 160; John 17:17), eternal (Ps 119:89), and cannot be broken (John 10:35). This trueness and

³ cf. Robert Preus, “The View of the Bible Held by the Church: The Early Church through Luther,” in *Inerrancy*, ed. Norman Geisler (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980), 357.

⁴ “The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy,” 494.

flawless nature extends to all that is written in the original autographs of Scripture so that every word must be believed (Acts 24:14). Inerrancy, however, is not to be evaluated by “standards of truth and error that are alien to its usage or purpose,” as stated in article XIII of the Chicago Statement which continues, “We further deny that inerrancy is negated by Biblical phenomena such as a lack of modern technical precision, irregularities of grammar or spelling, observational descriptions of nature, the reporting of falsehoods, the use of hyperbole and round numbers, the topical arrangement of material, variant selections of material in parallel accounts, or the use of free citations.”⁵

The Triune God

Definition

God has distinctly revealed Himself in history through the nation of Israel as Yahweh and through His Son Jesus Christ, the apostles, and the church as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

God is one, the only Creator of all things visible and invisible (Gen 1; Deut 6:4; Col 1:16; Heb 11:3). This one God exists as three eternal and coequal persons who are the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each is separate in person but same in substance (Deut 6:4; John 1:1-3; 3:16; Tit 3:4-6; Is 48:16; Eph 1:3-14; Mat 28:18-19).

Explanation and Argument

The doctrine of God as the Three in One is one of the church’s earliest and most important affirmations. The fathers affirm in the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed that each member of the Trinity is a distinct “person” (*hypostases*) but one and the same in “substance” or “nature” (*homoousion*).⁶ The doctrine of triunity rejects tritheism in all of its forms (seeing three separate gods), modalism in all of its forms (seeing one god merely manifested in three distinct ways), and subordinationism in all of its forms (seeing one or more members of the trinity subordinate in nature and thus inferior or less than equal to the other persons). God is one in substance or essence and three in person. The Scriptures proclaim monotheism (Deut 6:4) yet represent God as three distinct yet equal persons (John 1:1-3; 3:16; Tit 3:4-6; Is 48:16; Eph 1:3-14; Mat 28:18-19).

This biblical and historically orthodox understanding of God separates Him from all other religions and cults as the distinctly Christian God revealed through the Old and New Testaments and passed down as orthodoxy from the earliest witness of the church through the ages. As Carl

⁵ Ibid., 496.

⁶ John Leith, ed., *Creeeds of the Churches: A Reader in Christian Doctrine from the Bible to the Present* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1982), 33.

Laney puts it, “God is one, not several. But He is also three divine persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.... Apart from this fundamental truth, we have no basis for knowing God.”⁷

The Person of the Father

Definition, Explanation, and Argument

I believe God the Father has a unique role of Fatherhood to all creation but in different respects. To the creation He is Father in the sense of creator and sustainer, to the Lord Jesus Christ He is Father in the sense of equality and authority not origination, and to certain people whom He has freely and graciously chosen He is an adoptive Father making them His sons and daughters with the inheritance of eternal life (John 1:12; 8:42-59; Eph 1:4-5).

I believe in the providence of God over all created things and events which occur throughout time and history. He works in all situations for the praise of His glory and the execution of His decree even to the extent that evil can only exist by His allowance (Col 1:15-17; Eph 1:11-12; Rom 8:28-30; Heb 6:17-18).

The Person of the Holy Spirit

Definition, Explanation, and Argument

I believe that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Triune Godhead eternally existing with the Father and the Son and is not merely an essence or force of God (1Cor 2:10-11; 12:11; Eph 4:30). He has personality and is in fact God Himself (Matt 28:19; Acts 5:3-4).

The Person of the Son

Definition

Jesus of Nazareth is the second person of the Godhead existing eternally with the Father before creation (Col 1:16-17; John 1:3; 8:58). He is one with the Father and therefore the one and only God (John 10:30; 17:5, 21, 24; 17:21).

Although He eternally is, He became incarnate, born into the world into the likeness of man through the promised seed (Phil 2:5-9; Gen 3:15). Jesus was born through the miraculous conception of the Holy Spirit in Mary’s womb (Luke 1:31-35). Jesus through the incarnation is both Divine and human, fully God and fully man, without sin, existing in one person. He is of the very essence of the Father and of man yet He is one person; and the two natures, divine and

⁷ Carl J. Laney, “The Trinity of God,” in *Understanding Christian Theology*, ed. Charles R. Swindoll (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2003), 207.

human, are held together without “confusing the two natures..., without transmuting one nature into the other..., without dividing them into two separate categories..., without contrasting them according to area or function.”⁸

Explanation and Argument

Jesus is clearly spoken of in the Scriptures as the Divine “Word” existing eternally with the Father (John 1:3) before creation (Col 1:16-17) and is one in essence or nature with the Father (John 8:58) sharing the same eternal glory (John 17:5, 24). The Scriptures also speak of Jesus as fully human born in Bethlehem (Luke 1:31-35), “born in the likeness of men” (Phil 2:7), who experienced exhaustion (John 4:6) and sorrow (Matt 26:38), learned obedience (Heb 5:7-10), and was fully man in every way without sin (Heb 4:15; John 8:46; 2Cor 5:21; 1Pet 2:22). The early church affirmed the absolute eternal divinity of the Son as its earliest ecumenical confession⁹ and of His absolute humanity contained in one person.¹⁰

The Work of Christ

Definition

Jesus Christ made possible the salvation of every person who will be saved through His penal, substitutionary death on the cross and life-giving resurrection from the dead on the third day (John 3:16; Rom 3:20-26; 5:17-19; 1Cor 15:1-4; Phil 3:9-11). Jesus also ascended to the right hand of the Father and became Head over all things to the church, His body, and He never ceases to intercede and advocate for the saved (Eph. 1:22–23; Heb. 7:25; 1 John 2:1).¹¹

Explanation and Argument

Jesus Christ willingly submitted Himself to suffer and die on the cross as a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of mankind (Rom 3:25; 1John 4:10). The Son of God satisfied the wrath of the Father taking upon Himself the punishment for the sins of mankind (Is 53:4-6). Through the death of Christ every person of faith has the guilt of their sins removed by Christ’s redemptive blood and is justified (declared righteous) before the Father’s judgment (Rom 3:20-24; 5:9). Jesus Christ’s work in the cross and resurrection is the only means by which the sin of man can

⁸ Chalcedonian Creed translated in Leith, ed. *Creeds of the Churches: A Reader in Christian Doctrine from the Bible to the Present*, 36.

⁹ Creed of Nicaea and Constantinople translated in Leith, ed. *Creeds of the Churches*, 30-31.

¹⁰ Chalcedonian Creed translated in Leith, ed. *Creeds of the Churches*, 33.

¹¹ Article VI, Dallas Theological Seminary Doctrinal Statement (<http://www.dts.edu/about/doctrinalstatement/>, April 4, 2008)

be forgiven. He did not die as a moral example for men to follow leading themselves to salvation, nor does His work require any addition to fully pay for the guilt of every person of faith (Eph 2:8-9; Rom 3:20-26).

Humanity

Definition

The Triune God created all mankind as recounted in the creation narrative of Genesis 1 and 2. Man was created male and female in the “image of God” (Gen 1:26-27) with both a material and immaterial composition in one person (Gen 2:7; Mat 20:26; 27:50; John 12:27, 13:21) and without sin (Gen 1:31, “very good”).

Explanation and Argument

Man was immediately created by the Triune God from the dust of the ground and was fully man upon creation (Gen 1:26-31). Mankind did not come into being by gradual evolutionary development from simple life forms.¹²

The immaterial and material composition of man are the basic building blocks of man and consist of his physical body and spirit in one person (Gen 2:7; Matt 20:26; 27:50; John 12:27, 13:21). The “image of God” distinguishes man from the rest of creation as specially related to God and specially created. Mankind was created with will, emotion, intellect, reason, consciousness, morality, personal relatedness to God and others, and is given dominion over the earth.¹³

The immaterial part of man, his “spirit,” is not a greater or better part of God’s creation of man. The dichotomous composition of man is an “integrated whole”¹⁴ of both material and immaterial never meant to be separated.¹⁵

¹² The gradual development of man from simple life forms denies the creation of man by God in which He is intimately involved and does so from the dust of the ground and not from other life forms (Gen 27, 21-22; Ps 139:13-16; Job 33:4; cf. Charles R. Swindoll ed. and Roy B. Zuck ed., *Understanding Christian Theology*, (Nashville: Nelson 2003), 668.

¹³ Gen 1:26-31; Rom 2:14-16; 1Cor 2; cf. Dr. Scott Horrell. “Humanity: Toward a Biblical Concept of Personhood,” unpublished class notes for ST103 Angelology, Anthropology, Hamartiology (Dallas Theological Seminary, 2009) 6-11. cf. Charles R. Swindoll ed. and Roy B. Zuck ed., *Understanding Christian Theology*, (Nashville: Nelson 2003), 673-676.

¹⁴ Dr. Scott Horrell, “Humanity: Toward a Biblical Concept of Personhood,” unpublished class notes for ST103 Angelology, Anthropology, Hamartiology (Dallas Theological Seminary, 2009), 17.

¹⁵ Matt 22:37; Mar 12:30 (physical and immaterial are not clearly defined—a person’s whole being is in view including both material and immaterial); Isa 26:19; John 20:27 (Jesus was resurrected in a body and shows our resurrection to be the same); Luke 1:46-47; Matt 10:28□□1Co 7:34. Throughout Scripture there are no clear distinctions made between body and soul which place one above the other (apart from Paul’s references to the “flesh” against the “Spirit” which refers not to man’s component parts per se but to the internal battle of the sinful

Sin is not a necessary part of the “very good” human nature God created (Gen 1:31) but began at the fall (Gen 3).

Sin *Definition*

God created mankind “very good” (Gen 1:31) being free from fault or evil. However, through Adam’s sin all mankind and creation has come under the judgment of God resulting in death (both spiritual and physical), disease, and a corruption of all things created (Gen 3). Sin is defined as “any disposition or act contrary to God”¹⁶ and all mankind is found guilty of it (1Cor 15:21-22; Rom 3:23). The original sin of Adam corrupted the very nature of mankind so that all men are born with the nature to sin (“sinful nature”) and desire to sin (1Cor 15:21-22; Jer 17:9; Ps 51:5; Eph 2:1-3; Jam 4:1-4).

Explanation and Argument

Sin has caused separation of man from God,¹⁷ from himself,¹⁸ from one another,¹⁹ from nature,²⁰ and of nature from nature.²¹ The moral depravity of mankind since the fall has affected the whole man so that every part of him is corrupted (Rom 1:20-32, 3:9-18, 23; Jer 17:9; Pro 20:9). Moreover, every man is guilty of Adam’s sin (Rom 5:12)²² and will sin himself (Rom 3:23), thus being guilty by his own sinful nature, his own evil acts, and that of Adam. Man is guilty by his very corrupted nature before committing personal sin, and because of this nature commits willful acts of sin (Rom 5:12; Ps 51:5; Eph 2:3; Jam 1:14). The punishment for sin is death resulting in eternal judgment and separation from the Lord in a literal place of torment called Hell (Rom 6:23; Dan 12:2; Is 66:24; Mat 25:41, 46; Rev 20:14). The believer, although he

nature and the Holy Spirit); cf. Charles R. Swindoll ed. and Roy B. Zuck ed., *Understanding Christian Theology*, (Nashville: Nelson 2003) 691-693.

¹⁶ Dr. Scott Horrell, “Sin and Human Sinfulness: The Need for Salvation,” unpublished class notes for ST103 Angelology, Anthropology, Hamartiology (Dallas Theological Seminary, 2009), 4.

¹⁷ Gen 3:6-11 (“Where are you?...I was afraid”)

¹⁸ Gen 2:16-17; 3:16 (death as separation of man’s body and soul and increase of pain in childbirth)

¹⁹ Gen 3:12 (blames Eve); Gen 3:16 (conflict between husband and wife); Gen 4 (murder)

²⁰ Gen 3:17-19 (working the ground is now a toilsome labor and thorns are introduced)

²¹ 3:17-18; Rom 8:20; Isa 11:6-9; 65:17-25; cf. Dr. Scott Horrell, “The Fall and its Five Separations,” unpublished class notes for ST103 Angelology, Anthropology, Hamartiology (Dallas Theological Seminary, 2009), 5.

²² cf. Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan 2000), 494-95.

is given a new nature (Col 2:11-15; Eph 2:1-10), and is able to please God, still remains with a sinful nature (Gal 5:17; 1Jn 1:8-10) and must battle against it by the Spirit with careful awareness and repentance (Gal 5:16-26; 1Pet 5:8-9; 1Jn 1:9). The difference between the believer and the unbeliever is that the believer is able to please God and do truly good works to God's glory whereas the unbeliever is unable to please God and unable to do any good work to God's glory making every work of his tainted with sinful rebellion and springing forth from an unregenerate heart (Rom 1-2; 1Jn 1:5-8; Eph 2:10).²³

Salvation

Definition

Salvation comes to every believing person owing only to the work of Christ on the cross, the work of the Spirit in rebirth, and is wholly by the grace of God (Rom 3:20-26; Rom 5:17-19; Eph 2:8-9). Salvation is not due to any merit on the individual's behalf but is a gift of God's grace given through faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ in His death and resurrection (Eph 2:8-9; Rom 10:9-13). I agree with the DTS doctrinal statement when it says, "no degree of reformation however great, no attainments in morality however high, no culture however attractive, no baptism or other ordinance however administered, can help the sinner to take even one step toward heaven; but a new nature imparted from above."²⁴

Once an elect of God is regenerated and places faith in the work of Jesus Christ on the cross and resurrection, sin is removed and the guilt of it is put upon Christ, thus making the elect individual completely free from all of his guilt and no longer under God's wrath and condemnation (Rom 5:9; Eph 2). He is justified or declared righteous by the Father (Rom 3:23, 26, 28), he is positionally made righteous and progressively being made righteous through the work of the Spirit and like a cleansed leper before the chief priest enabled to enjoy fellowship with God. (1Cor 1:30; 6:11; 2Cor 5:19-21; Phil 3:7-11; 1John 1:3, 6)

Explanation and Argument

Salvation is possible only through the work of Christ because all men are dead in sin (Eph 2) and unable to please God. Therefore, with the DTS doctrinal statement I agree, "our redemption has been accomplished solely by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was made to be sin and was made a curse for us, dying in our room and stead; and that no repentance, no feeling, no faith, no good resolutions, no sincere efforts, no submission to the rules and regulations of any church, nor all the churches that have existed since the days of the Apostles

²³ cf. Augustine, "On Nature and Grace," chapter 62, and "On Rebuke and Grace," chapter 11.

²⁴ Article VII, Dallas Theological Seminary Doctrinal Statement (<http://www.dts.edu/about/doctrinalstatement/>, April 4, 2008)

can add in the very least degree to the value of the blood, or to the merit of the finished work wrought for us by Him who united in His person true and proper deity with perfect and sinless humanity.”²⁵

The salvation of all men is due entirely to the free grace of God and has no basis in the individual’s efforts or merits. This special grace is the expression of the Divine love whereby He gives the gift of eternal life freely, unconditionally, and undeservedly for His own glory (Eph 2:8-10; 1:6-7; 2:5; Tit 2:11; Rom 4:16; 1Cor 1:26-31).

Faith is necessary for salvation. It is the outflow of one who has been born again or regenerated by God. Saving faith occurs at the moment of regeneration when one trusts in Christ alone for salvation from sin and death through His redeeming sacrifice (Rom 3:20-26; Eph 2:8; Heb 11:6; Rom 10:9-10; Rom 1:5; 2Cor 5:7; 1John 5:4-5).

The salvation of all who believe in Christ was determined according to the decree or decision of God in eternity past (Eph 1:4-5, 9-11; 2:8-10; Rom 8:29). They are the elect of God according to His will in which He predestined (or determined before time) to adopt them as His very own children. (Rom 9:11-12, 16; Deut 7:6-7; Isa 46:9-10; Ps 139:16; Jam 2:5; 2Tim 1:9)

The Father calls to repentance and to a new life His elect. There is both an external or general and an internal or effectual calling of God. The external or general call is the preaching of the gospel message through which the invitation is made. Not all who are presented with this general call will accept it. The effectual or internal calling of God is the working of God through the gospel whereby He changes the heart and draws the individual to faith and salvation. This calling, however, is not only to salvation but to a relationship with God, a position as the called, and a life of discipleship of himself and others. (Rom 8:30; 1Thess 5:24; Heb 3:1; Eph 4:1-4; John 6:44-46; 2Cor 4:6).

Angels, Demons, Satan

Definition, Explanation, and Argument

I believe that the Triune God created a host of perfect supernatural beings called angels.²⁶ Angels are immortal, finite spirit beings possessing personality, supernatural strength, majesty, and intelligence.²⁷ Angels are primarily God's messengers who constantly live to worship and praise the Lord (Ps 103:20-21; Isa 6:2-3; Rev 4:8-9). Yet angels are also used of the Lord to

²⁵ Article VII, Dallas Theological Seminary Doctrinal Statement (<http://www.dts.edu/about/doctrinalstatement/>, April 4, 2008)

²⁶ Job 38:4-7; Ps 148:2,5; Col 1:16; Dt 33:2; Jude 14; Rev 5:11; cf. Wayne Grudem. *Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan 2000. 397, 99

²⁷ 2Sa 24:17; Ps 103:20; Mt 26:53; Rev 10:1-3; 20:1-3; 2Sa 14:20; Rev 17:1; Mat 24:31; 2Pe 2:11; Ps 8:5; Heb 1:14; 2Kgs 6:17; Lk 2:9, 13-14; Dr. Scott Horrell “Angels: Elect and Evil” unpublished class notes for ST103 Angelology, Anthropology, Hamartiology (Dallas Theological Seminary, 2009) 5-7.

deliver judgment, protect and care for believers, and are present in the life of the elect.²⁸ Angels also exist with some form of hierarchy as the angel Michael is called an “archangel,” (Jude 9) “one of the chief princes,” (Dan 10:13) leads an army of angels against Satan, (Rev 12:7-8) and may announce the return of the Lord (1Thess 4:16).²⁹ There also appears to exist distinct kinds of angels in Heaven designated with the titles “Seraphim” (Isa 6:2-7),³⁰ “Cherubim” (Gen 3:24; Ps 18:10; Ezek 10:1-22),³¹ and “living creatures” (Ezek 1:5-14; Rev 4:6-8).³²

I believe that angels were created pure and sinless but that one angel, Satan, became full of pride and sinned against God desiring to be “like the Most High” (Isa 14:4, 12-15; Ezek 28:2, 12-17). Other angels followed Lucifer in his fall and became demons carrying out his evil purposes (Mat 25:41; Rev 12:7-9; 2Pet 2:4; Jude 6). Satan was the originator of sin and deceit leading Adam and Eve to sin in the garden and become followers of the Devil's ways (Gen 3; John 8:44). Satan has become the ruler of this age leading his followers away from God, has access to the throne of God for a limited time, and is a liar, tempter, and destroyer.³³

Demons contribute to the work of the Devil through oppression or demonizing, possession of physical beings, and promulgation of the devil's deceit.³⁴ Satan and demons are masters of deceit and frequently disguise themselves as angels of light and have led countless people astray into false religions, cults, and sinful practices (2Co 11:13-15; 1Tim 4:1-3). I believe that Satan was defeated at the cross when Jesus became the propitiatory sacrifice for all the sin's of the elect and overcame death (Gen 3:15; Col 2:13-15; John 12:31; 16:11).

I believe that while believers may be oppressed or tempted³⁵ they can never be possessed or controlled by Satan and his demons because of Christ's defeat of Satan at the cross and the power of the indwelling Spirit in every believer to reject and have victory over them (Col 2:15; Eph 6:10-18; Jam 4:7; 1Pet 5:8-9; Rom 16:20)

Satan will one day be judged, along with every demon and human who follows in his rebellion, and thrown into the lake of fire where he will face eternal torment (Mat 25:41; Rev 20:10-15; 2Pet 2:4; Jude 1:6; Rev 12:7-9).

²⁸ Rev 8:2; 15:7; 20:1-3; Heb 1:14; Da 6:22; 10:13, 20; Ps 34:7; 2Ki 6:13-17; Da 3:24-26; 1Ti 5:19

²⁹ cf. Wayne Grudem. *Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan 2000. 398

³⁰ Isa 6:2-7 (only mentioned here and continually praise God)

³¹ guard the entrance to Eden and are related to the presence of God as they are closely associated with the ark and the temple-figures on the ark lid, two statues in the Holy of Holies, and woven into the fabric of the veil

³² exist around God's throne and appear as various animals and even with human characteristics

³³ Lk 4:5-8; 2Co 4:3-4; Eph 2:1-3; 1Jn 5:18-19; Job 1:6-2:1; Ge 3:1ff; Mt 4:1-11; 16:23; Ac 5:3; 1Co 7:4-5; 1Co 10:20; 1Pe 5:8-9

³⁴ Mt 4:24; 8:28-33; 9:32; 12:22; 17:15; Mk 5:1-10; 9:17; Lk 8:26-29; 1Ti 4:1-3; Da 10:4-12:13

³⁵ 1Co 7:5 [lust]; 2Co 11:3 [false preaching]; Eph 4:27 [anger]; 1Ti 3:7 [pride]; 2Ti 2:26 [contentiousness]; 1Co 5:5[incest]; 1Ti 1:20 [blasphemy]; 5:15; Rev 2:9, 13.

Ecclesiology

Definition, Explanation, and Argument

I believe the true body of Christ³⁶ is the one,³⁷ holy,³⁸ catholic,³⁹ and apostolic⁴⁰ church,⁴¹ called by God the Father, united in Christ, and preserved by the Spirit. A true Christian congregation⁴² is centered on Christ's person and work, governed by the Holy Scriptures, conformed to the ancient tradition,⁴³ identified by particular apostolic marks and works,⁴⁴ and free from gross⁴⁵ heresy.⁴⁶

I believe there are three authenticating marks of the church: orthodoxy, order, and ordinances. I believe that orthodoxy is correct belief and practice in conformity to God's revelation⁴⁷ and apostolic teaching,^{48 49} and secondarily to ancient tradition⁵⁰ and evangelical

³⁶ The Church is the "body of Christ" cf.: Eph 1:22-23, Eph 5:29-30, Col 1:18, Rom 12:5, 1Cor 12:12-13, Col 3:15. The body of Christ refers to the universal church.

³⁷ Key passage Eph 4:4-6, we are one body (church) in one Spirit, hope, Lord, faith, baptism, and God. The church is "one" in that it is a new 'humanity' called by God and united in Christ by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Additional passages: John 17:11, 21-23; Romans 12:5; 1Cor 1:10 & 10:17; Eph 2:14-16 & 4:16

³⁸ "holy" from the Greek ἅγιός means "set apart." Paul often uses a form of the plural ἅγιοι (often translated "saints") in the introductions of his epistles to different churches: cf. 1Cor 1:2, Eph 1:1, Phil 1:1, Col 1:2, Romans 1:7. The church is set apart and therefore has an identity distinct from the beliefs and practices of the world. cf. Jn 17:11-18, Eph 5:25-27, 1Pet 2:4,9.

³⁹ "catholic," not referring to a denomination, but in reference to the whole church can be understood as: a share of all churches in both confession and cooperation, or being in conformity with what has been believed by all believers everywhere at all times. Use of term catholic goes back to Ignatius, *Smrynaeans* 8.2.

⁴⁰ In conformity with the apostolic teaching reflected in the Scriptures and echoed in history

⁴¹ language of "one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church" is from Niceno-Constantinople creed.

⁴² a true Christian congregation now refers to local churches and not just the universal church.

⁴³ This does not mean that the local church will look exactly like the "New Testament church." There was variance in the church very early in its history. Rather this refers back to the earlier point of being "apostolic" in that it follows what has been believed by all believers at all times in all places.

⁴⁴ These marks and works are key to the definition of the church. The church must have three marks, and three works. These will be discussed further in the following paragraphs.

⁴⁵ "Gross" heresy can be understood as knowingly and willingly believing or teaching heresy. This does not necessarily apply to heresy due to ignorance.

⁴⁶ Definition comes from Svigel in class notes, *Lecture_Slides_03*

⁴⁷ cf. Num. 23:19, Deut. 32:4 Sam. 15:29, John 1:9, 14; 5:32, 6:32, 7:18, 8:14-16, 40, 45, 10:41, 14:6, and more

⁴⁸ cf. Acts 2:42, 9:15, 13:1-4, 15:22-32, 22:14-15, 26:16, Rom. 1:1, 1Cor. 1:1, 15:1-4, 2Cor. 1:1, 5:18-20, and more

⁴⁹ From a church history perspective, the central elements of orthodoxy that are primarily important are the doctrines of the Trinity (Matt. 1:23, 28:19; John 1:1, 5:18), the incarnation (John 1:1-10, 14, 18) death (Romans 3:24-26; 4:25), and resurrection of Christ (Matt. 27:50-53, Rom. 1:4-5, 6:8-11), the depravity of humanity (Gen.

distinctives.⁵¹ I believe order is the mark of the correct transmission of tradition,⁵² organization,⁵³ discipline,⁵⁴ and unity of the church.⁵⁵

I believe Baptism is the rite of initiation into the corporate body of Christ,⁵⁶ unifies the body of Christ,⁵⁷ is and expression of repentance of sins,⁵⁸ follows belief as a proclamation,⁵⁹ is the seal and symbol of our salvation and new life through grace in Christ,⁶⁰ and thus should follow a Trinitarian proclamation of belief.⁶¹ I believe the primary mode of baptism is immersion, but understand that Scripture and the early church record allows for differing methods of Baptism.⁶²

I believe the Lord's Table is the memorial of our covenant relationship to Christ,⁶³ a thanksgiving for His sacrifice,⁶⁴ and serves as a means of renewal of commitment and fellowship

8:21) and its need for grace (Eph. 2:1-3), salvation by grace through faith alone (Eph. 1:4-5 2:8-10). From Svigel, Michael J. "Sanctification and Ecclesiology, Lecture 1, slide 42.

⁵⁰ cf. Vincent of Lerins, *the Comminatory* 2.6.

⁵¹ From an evangelical perspective, orthodoxy also includes the doctrines of inerrancy and inspiration of Scripture (2Tim. 3:16-17; 2Pet. 1:21; John 17:17.), and the priority of evangelism and discipleship (Matt. 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-16.).

⁵² Vincent of Lerins, *the Comminatory* 2.6., cf. 2Tim. 2:2

⁵³ Ignatius notes that the church should consider the Bishop as God the Father, the elders as His council and as the Apostles, otherwise it should not be called a church. (*Trallians* 3.1). Svigel, lecture 5, slide 27.

⁵⁴ The purpose of church discipline is to remove harmful sin from the church (1 Cor. 4:6, 5:1-13, 1 Tim. 5:20, Gal. 6:1.), to train it in righteousness (Heb. 12:6-12, 2 Thess. 3:6-10, 2 Tim. 3:16.), to protect the reputation of the church (1 Pet. 2:11-18, 3:15-16, 4:4, 15.), and to emulate God's holiness (1 Pet. 1:16, 3:10-12).

⁵⁵ I believe one mark of the church is unity and single-mindedness, which relates to order. cf. 1 Cor. 1:10, Philippians 2:2 and Irenaeus of Lyons, in *Against Heresies* 3.24.1

⁵⁶ In this way, Baptism is to the New Covenant church like what circumcision was to Mosaic Covenant Israel, yet in this case marking entrance into a whole new life and positional standing before God (cf. Col. 2:11-12). It marks the entrance into the Kingdom of God (John 3:5, Mark 16:15-16). *The Shepherd of Hermas* (Parable, 9; 16) refers to baptism as entry into new life and the church. (Hanna, Church history I notes, p. 20-21). As Dr. Hanna notes, it was universally accepted as the means of admission into the church. (Ibid.).

⁵⁷ cf. Rom. 6:1-4, Gal. 3:27, Eph. 4:4-6, 1Cor. 12:13.

⁵⁸ cf. Acts 2:36-38, 19:4-5, 22:16, Justin, *First Apology*, 61

⁵⁹ Acts 2:36-41, 10:47-48; 16:32-33; 18:7-8, 1Pet. 3:21-22.

⁶⁰ cf. Eph. 5: 25-26, 1Pet. 3:21-22, Tit. 3:5. Clement of Alexandria refers to Baptism as a seal of salvation in *The Homily of Clement*. (Hanna, Church History I class notes, p. 18-19).

⁶¹ cf. *Didache* 1:9, 7:1-4. Ignatius, *To the Ephesians*, 9.1, *To the Magnesians*, 13.1, 13.2. Likewise, I believe baptism to be a public pledge of faith and obedience to Christ (cf. Matt. 28:19-20, Acts 2:41-42, 8:26-39, 10:47-48, 19:3-5, Justin Martyr, *First Apology*, 61.).

⁶² Rom 6:3-4 (Immersion), Tit 3:5-6 (Pouring), Heb 10:22 (Sprinkling), and the *Didache*; cf. Svigel, lecture 9, slide 33.

⁶³ cf. 1Cor. 11:23-26.

⁶⁴ cf. the *Didache*, 9-10 which views the Eucharist as a meal of thanksgiving.

with Christ.⁶⁵ I believe these are the only ordinances we are commanded to observe and while they are beneficial and edifying to the soul, they do not merit or bestow saving grace.

I believe the purpose of the Church to be the gathering and perfecting of the saints through the Holy Spirit in this life to the end of the world⁶⁶, to equip the saints for the work of ministry⁶⁷, for building up the body of Christ to be a community sufficient to face truthfully the nature of our sinful world, to bear witness in its faith and its obedience, in its proclamation and its order that it belongs to Christ as the earnest of God's Kingdom⁶⁸ and is awaiting His return (Acts 1:8; 13:47).

In relation to its purpose, I believe there are three essential works of the church.^{69 70} First, the pursuit of bringing glory to the Father, through Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, or *exaltation*. This exaltation is to promote the glory of God, magnifying Him in every facet of corporate life, worship and service. Secondly, to build up believers to actively love God and others, through opportunities to serve with those gifts of the Spirit, talent, and resources God has graciously imparted, or *edification*⁷¹. This work of edification exists to develop the progressive unity and maturity of the local members. Thirdly, the church is to be engaged in the work of God's mission to save and redeem the lost (Luke 19:10) through local and global evangelism (Acts 1:8; Mat 28:19-20).

⁶⁵ cf. 1 Cor. 10:16, 11:27-33, and Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 4:18:5

⁶⁶ The Westminster Confession of Faith on the Church, MacGrath Theology Reader, 513.

⁶⁷ (Eph. 4:12-13) According to Grudem, "We can understand the purposes of the church in terms of ministry to God, ministry to believers, and ministry to the world."

Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 867.

⁶⁸ Stanley Hauerwas on the Importance of the Church, MacGrath, 541.

⁶⁹ Once we have established the presence of a genuine and authentic local church, their presence in the world can be known through the commitment to service in three key areas. Each area is an outworking and demonstration of God's mission through the church, as well as the greatest of the commandments as the church seeks to love God and others (Matt 22:35-40). The works of the church are works of service that should be motivated by this love for God, and love for others, ultimately in response to God's love for us

⁷⁰ *RetroChristianity*, pg 131.

⁷¹ Edification as a work, also a function of the church includes the teaching and preaching of scripture or propositional truth. *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, pg 97.

The service referenced here includes giving and financial support to the local church, and towards the works that local church is to be engaged in.

Sanctification and Spiritual Gifts

Definition, Explanation, and Argument

I believe that every Christian is given new, spiritual life by the Holy Spirit's work of regeneration⁷² but that he still retains his sin nature.⁷³ Therefore, I believe that sanctification is the necessary, progressive work of the Spirit, never perfected in this life, to transform the Christian into the character of Christ.⁷⁴

I believe that the cause of sanctification is always the gracious work of the Spirit using both extrinsic and intrinsic means accompanied by the voluntary action and will of the individual to accomplish the Christian's growth in Christlikeness⁷⁵. I believe that sanctification reaches its completeness in glorification at the resurrection when Christ returns.⁷⁶

⁷² Every Christian's nature has changed at conversion. The Spirit works by the "washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit" (Tit 3:5) to make a believer spiritually "born again" (John 3:1-8) and changed from a position of deadness in sin (Eph 2:1) to deadness to sin (Rom 6:11, 14) and life in the Spirit (Rom 6:11; 8:9-10). The Christian is no longer completely dominated or ruled by sin's power (Rom 6:11, 14, 18) but is "alive to God" (Rom 6:11). This is the "holy disposition imparted in regeneration" (A.H. Strong, *Systematic Theology*, 869) "when a newness of life was conferred upon and instilled within the believer" (Millard Erickson, *Systematic Theology*, 980).

⁷³ Every Christian is exhorted in Scripture "not to let sin reign" (Rom 6:12-13) and that there is an internal conflict between the Spirit and the flesh (Gal 5:17ff) in his life. The sinful nature still remains, though it has been overcome by the Spirit so that it is no longer the dominating force which he is doomed to live by (Rom 8:7-9, the Christian is not one of those "in the flesh," that is, ruled by the flesh and completely unable to please God, but is now "in the Spirit" as the new rule of his life though sin remains). The Christian will continue to sin because of his sinful nature.

⁷⁴ The Spirit works in the Christian's life not with a one-time filling or perfecting work whereby sin is removed or wherein past sins are never again committed, but through a gradual, constant work on the believer with the goal of Christlikeness (Phil 1:6; Col 3:10; Eph 4:15; Phil 3:12; 1John 1:8)

⁷⁵ Sanctification is caused by the Spirit and not the works or will of the human (Rom 8:9-10; Gal 5:16; 1Thess 5:23; Phil 2:13). God is the one who "works in you both to will and to work for His good pleasure" (Phil 2:13). However, the Spirit always works through the human effort of the individual implying "intelligent, voluntary activity" (Michael Svigel, *Lecture Slides 11, slide 23*). The Spirit graciously works through various means in the Christian life both internally (regenerating work, John 3:5; Eph 2:4-6, 8-9; Tit 3:5) and externally (the fellowship, accountability, spiritual gifts, and sacraments of the church—Heb 10:24-25; 1Cor 12:7; Rom 6; 1Cor 11—and individual disciplines of the Word, prayer, fasting, solitude, etc.—1Tim 4:7-8; 2Tim 3:15ff; Phil 1:9-11; Matt 14:23—cf. Michael Svigel, *Lecture Slides 11, slide 43*)

⁷⁶ This is the perfect state of the Christian, both soul and body, free from sin (Rom 8:18-30; Phil 1:6; 1Th 5:23-24)

I believe that the Holy Spirit endows believers with spiritual gifts⁷⁷ for the edification of the body of believers⁷⁸ through diverse ministries⁷⁹ but that some gifts of the Holy Spirit such as apostleship, prophecy, speaking in tongues and miraculous healings have ceased⁸⁰ and that the filling of the Holy Spirit is for all regenerated believers who are yielding and submitting their lives to His will.⁸¹

Eschatology

Definition, Explanation, and Argument

I believe that the Christian's true and ultimate hope is found in the Lord Jesus Christ (Tit 2:13). I also believe that the hope of every believer and for the whole creation is the resurrection

⁷⁷ Charisma is the characteristic New Testament word for "spiritual gift"...since the Greek word for "grace" is charis, charisma may properly be translated "gift of grace" and specifically in the New Testament, "gift of God's grace." The gifts of the Spirit are depicted in several passages (Eph 4:1-16, Rom 12: 1-8, I Cor 12:1-31), are various (1Cor 12:4-6) and are given as He wills (1Cor 12:11). Moreover, certain texts specifically list the types of gifted people (1Cor 12:28-30, Eph 4:11, 1Pet 4:11) which includes apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, workers of miracles, healers, helpers/servers, administrators, speakers of tongues and interpreters. Coincidentally, there are also listings of gifted abilities (Rom 12:6-8; 1Cor 12:8-10; 1Cor 13:1-3; 1 Pet 4:11 that include prophecy, serving, teaching/speaking, exhortation, giving, leading, showing mercy, word of wisdom and word of knowledge. Another listing of gifted abilities is concurrently found in the same texts (Rom 12:6-8; 1Cor 12:8-10; 1Cor 13:1-3; 1Pet 4:11) and lists faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discernment of spirits, kinds of tongues, and interpretation of tongues.

⁷⁸ Edification is one of the works of the church "as a covenanted community in Christ...a primary locus for the building up of believers in love and good works through the participation of its various members in their Spirit-gifted ministries, resulting in unity and maturity" (Michael Svingel, Lecture 5, slide 33). Spiritual gifts are given for diverse purposes but are ultimately purposed to build up the body of Christ (Rom 12:4-5), "for the common good" (1 Cor 12:7, 25; cf. Dr Michael Svingel, Lecture 12, slide 19 & 20).

⁷⁹ Ministry is the responsibility of the church; "God's Spirit endows the church with a variety of spiritual gifts out of the "fullness of Christ" (Eph 4:13) so that the church may grow up ...into Christ (Eph 4:15).

⁸⁰ Some of the gifts of the Holy Spirit have ended in the church age, including prophecy, healing, speaking in tongues, and the working of miracles because they were a special endowment in order to build the New Testament church (Gerald R. McDermott, *The Oxford Handbook of Theology* [New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2010], 329). Furthermore, the offices of Apostle and Prophet have also ceased in the church as they were associated with eyewitness testimony of Jesus and special signs of authority. As gifted people, apostles and prophets were appointed (1Cor 12:28), were the foundation, (Eph 2:20), eyewitnesses (1Cor 16:7-9) and were able to perform signs, wonders and miracles (2Cor 12:12, Heb 2:3-4, Mark 16:17-18, 20). Moreover, "speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism nor of the filling of the Spirit" (Dallas Theological Seminary Doctrinal Statement, Article 12; I Cor. 12:8-11; 29-30). Prophecy and the interpretation of tongues as divine manifestations are deemed prophetic gifts that were strictly associated with the sign of the Spirit. The prophetic gifts "stand in tension with the canonicity of the New Testament since the canon is closed. Finally, similar to the argument for the end of apostleship as a gift, healing as a gift was also enabled specifically for the apostles as a confirmation of the authority of their message, though healing may still occur through the prayers of the body of believers.

⁸¹The indwelling of the Spirit is the act whereby at conversion the Holy Spirit makes the believing sinner His permanent dwelling place forever (John 14:16-17; 16:7-11; Rom. 8:9, 11; 1Cor. 2:12; 3:1-4, 16; 6:19; 12:13; Eph. 3:17; 4:30; 5:18; James 4:5; 2 Thess. 2:7; 1John 2:20-27), marking the believer with conscious submission and obedience to the work of the Holy Spirit to effect sanctification (Eph.5:18).

of our bodies and the recreation of the earth (1Cor 15:22-23, 35-58; 2Cor 5:3-5Rom 8:11, 20-23; Rev 21:1-7).

I believe that the tribulation is a time period set aside for the discipline and salvation of Israel, the judgment of God's enemies by the pouring out of His wrath, and the establishment of Christ's 1,000 year millennial reign on the earth (Jer 30:7-11; Dan 9:24-27; 12:1; Rev 6:10, 16-17; 7:3-8; 11:15-18; 19:11-21:7).

I believe that the Rapture of the church will occur as the first stage of the day of the Second Coming prior to the tribulation period of God's wrath (1Thess 4:13-16; 2Thess 2:2-4). I also believe that though the existing church will be raptured before the tribulation, others will believe during the tribulation so that the church will be present (Rev 6:9; 7:4; 12:11; 14:1, 3; 20:4).

I believe in the imminency of Christ's return suddenly and without warning (Matt 24:36-39).

I believe in a 1,000 year reign of Christ on earth beginning after the Second Coming of Christ and at the end of a 7 year tribulation period. (Rev 19:11-21:7; Dan 9:24-27).

I believe that the millennial kingdom of Christ will be one filled with righteousness, peace, love, and justice on the earth. Jesus Christ will be ruler of the entire world and will never be succeeded by another king. (Dan 2; 7:14; Isa 11).

I believe that the covenants of the Bible are unconditional everlasting covenants made primarily to Israel and have salvific blessings for Gentiles. The new covenant in Christ, however, brings both Jew and Gentile together into the church (Eph 2:11-22). The covenants, however, that are made to Israel (Abrahamic, Land, and Davidic) will be fulfilled to believing Israel (Gen 15; 17; 50:24; Ex 2:24; Deut 4:31; 9:5-6; 2Kgs 13:23; Mic 7:18, 20; Luke 1:67-75; Acts 3:25-26; Heb 6:13-20).

I believe that there will be two judgments on mankind, one of believers at the Rapture and Second Coming and one of unbelievers at the end of the millennium along with Satan and his minions (Lk 14:14; 2Cor 5:1-10; Rev 19:7-8; 20; 22:12).

I believe that those who have not placed their faith in the work of Christ on the cross will be judged according to their works and will be condemned to eternal punishment in hell. Those who have placed their faith in Christ will find their names written in His book of life and will live for eternity in paradise with God on the new earth (John 3:16; 5:22-29; Rom 10:9; 2Pet 3:13; Isa 66:22-24; Rev 20; 21:8).

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