

## DOCTRINAL CONFESSION

**Section 1. The Bible.** We believe that the Holy Bible of the Old and New Testaments was breathed out by God and written by human authors as the Holy Spirit carried them along. It is therefore without error, sufficient for the faith and practice of the Church, and the final standard by which all human conduct, confessions, and opinions should be judged.

(2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20–21)

**Section 2. The True God.** We believe that there is one living and true God. He is the creator and ruler of heaven and earth. He is inexpressibly glorious in holiness and worthy of all honor, trust, and love. He exists eternally as three persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are equal in essence, but distinct in their roles in the work of salvation.

(Deuteronomy 6:4–5; 2 Corinthians 13:14)

### **Section 3. God the Father.**

We believe in God the Father, the first Person of the Trinity. As a spirit, He is infinite, self-sufficient and unchangeable. As Father, He is the source of all things seen and unseen, the fountain of love, generosity, wisdom, truth and holiness. In creation, He is the Father of all mankind. He is Father to the Son with whom He sends the Spirit. He is the Sovereign Sustainer over all things, and by His decree of adoption, He becomes Father to all who come to His Son by faith.

(1 Chronicles 29:11; Nehemiah 9:6; Psalms 103:19; 145:8-9; John 1:12; 3:16-17; 4:24; 14:26; 15:26; 17:5; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 11:3; Galatians 4:4-6; Ephesians 1:3-14; 3:9, 15; 4:6; 1 John 4:10)

**Section 4. God the Son.** We believe that Jesus Christ was fully God and fully human and, in Christ's person, these two natures *exist* without confusion and without change, yet also without division and without separation. He was conceived supernaturally by the power of the Holy Spirit and borne by the Virgin Mary. We believe Christ lived a completely perfect and sinless life, yet he was tempted as all humans are. We believe that Christ came as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies and of the three major Old Testament offices: prophet, priest, and king: As prophet, Christ reveals the Father; Christ, as our high priest, mediates between humanity and God; finally, as our king, Christ is presently ruling over the Church.

(John 1:1-2, 14; Heb. 1:1-1-3; Phil. 2:5-8; Heb. 4:15)

**Section 5: God the Holy Spirit.** We believe that the Holy Spirit is fully God and is to be worshipped as God. He worked in the creation of the world, the incarnation and ministry of Jesus Christ, and the writing of Holy Scripture. His mission is to draw people to the Son, apply the work of redemption, regenerate and indwell believers, baptize them into union with Christ and His body. He also endows believers with gifts, transforms them in the image of Jesus, and secures them for final salvation.

(Matthew 28:19; John 3:3-7; John 14:16-17; John 16: 8-11; Titus 3:5; Romans 8:9; I Corinthians 2:12, 12:13, Ephesians 4:30)

**Section 6. The Fall of Humanity.** We believe that humans were created good, but by voluntary disobedience of God's law fell from their holiness and happiness. As a result of Adam's sin, and by their own choice, all people are now sinners without excuse and subject to the just condemnation of God's eternal judgment.

(Romans 3:23; 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3)

**Section 7. The Way of Salvation.** We believe that the salvation of sinners is by grace alone, through the death of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and our Mediator. Obeying the will of the Father, he freely took upon himself our human nature, yet without sin. He honored the divine law by his personal obedience, and made atonement for our sins by his death. He rose bodily from the dead and is now enthroned in heaven where he intercedes for us as our all-sufficient savior.

(Ephesians 2:4-9; Romans 8:31-34; Philippians 2:5-11)

**Section 8. Justification.** We believe that justification is that great blessing of the gospel, which consists of the forgiveness of sins and the promise of eternal life. It is not earned by works of the law but is given by faith alone to the one who believes in Jesus Christ alone. It brings us into a state of peace and favor with God, and it secures every other blessing needed for time and eternity.

(Romans 3:21-26; 5:1)

**Section 9. The Freeness of Salvation.** We believe that salvation is offered freely to all people through the gospel. It is the duty of all people to accept salvation through repentance of their sins and faith in Jesus Christ. Nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinners on earth except their own depravity and voluntary refusal to submit to the Lord Jesus Christ.

(Acts 2:37-39; 16:30-31)

**Section 10. Regeneration.** We believe that one must be regenerated or born again in order to be saved. Regeneration is the changing of the human heart by the power of the Holy Spirit, through the truth of the gospel, in a way that is above our comprehension. The necessary evidence of regeneration is a progressive growth in holy living and obedience for the glory of God.

(John 3:3-8; Ephesians 2:10)

**Section 11. God's Purpose of Grace.** We believe that God, in his grace, chooses to save sinners and to keep them to the end. Divine election is consistent with human free will. It excludes boasting and promotes humility. All true believers will be kept by God's grace and will persevere to the end. Perseverance is the mark, which distinguishes true believers from professing Christians.

(John 6:37-40; Ephesians 1:3-6)

**Section 12. The Church.** We believe that there is one holy, universal, and apostolic church. The Church is united spiritually now and will one day be gathered together for the praise and glory of God and Jesus Christ. The local Church is a gathered congregation of baptized believers, united by their faith in the gospel, led by elders and deacons, and observing the ordinances of Christ—baptism and the Lord’s Supper. Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is a sign of the new covenant and a public display of our faith in Jesus Christ. The Lord’s Supper is a communal remembrance and proclamation of the Lord’s death until he comes again.  
(Matthew 28:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–26; Philippians 1:1)

**Section 13. Marriage.** We believe that God created both male and female in His image for His own glory as an inseparable, one-flesh marriage to love, enjoy, procreate and unify. This earthly union embodies the complementary roles within the Trinity and glorifies the eternal reality of Christ and His bride, the Church.  
(Genesis 1:26-31; 2:18-25; Isaiah 54:5; 61:10; Hosea 2:19; Matthew 19:6; John 3:29; Ephesians 5:22-33; Colossians 3:18-19; Revelation 19:6-10)

**Section 14. Civil Government.** We believe that God ordains civil government for the interests and good order of human society. Leaders are to be prayed for and obeyed, except in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, the ruler of the kings of the earth.  
(Psalm 2:7–9; Acts 4:18–20; Romans 13:1)

**Section 15. The Return of Christ.** We believe that the end of this world is approaching. On the last day, Christ will descend from heaven and raise the dead from the grave to the final judgment. A separation will then take place: the wicked will go to endless punishment, and the righteous, who have believed in Jesus Christ and been sanctified by the Holy Spirit, will go to endless joy.  
(Matthew 25:31–33; 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18)