



Doctrinal Statement (What We Teach)

The Holy Scriptures

We teach that the Bible is God's written revelation to man, and thus the 66 books of the Bible given to us by the Holy Spirit constitute the plenary (inspired equally in all parts) Word of God (1 Corinthians 2:7–14; 2 Peter 1:20–21). We teach that the Word of God is an objective, propositional revelation (1 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Corinthians 2:13), verbally inspired in every word (2 Timothy 3:16), absolutely inerrant in the original documents, infallible, and God-breathed. We teach the literal, grammatical-historical interpretation of Scripture which affirms the belief that the opening chapters of Genesis present creation in six literal days (Genesis 1:31; Exodus 31:17). We teach that the Bible constitutes the only infallible rule of faith and practice (Matthew 5:18; 24:35; John 10:35; 16:12–13; 17:17; 1 Corinthians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:15–17; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Peter 1:20–21).

We teach that God spoke in His written Word by a process of dual authorship. The Holy Spirit so superintended the human authors that, through their individual personalities and different styles of writing, they composed and recorded God's Word to man (2 Peter 1:20–21) without error in the whole or in the part (Matthew 5:18; 2 Timothy 3:16).

We teach that, whereas there may be several applications of any given passage of Scripture, there is but one true interpretation. The meaning of Scripture is to be found as one diligently applies the literal grammatical-historical method of interpretation under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit (John 7:17; 16:12–15; 1 Corinthians 2:7–15; 1 John 2:20). It is the responsibility of believers to ascertain carefully the true intent and meaning of Scripture, recognising that proper application is binding on all generations. Yet the truth of Scripture stands in judgment of men; never do men stand in judgment of it.

God

We teach that there is but one living and true God (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5–7; 1 Corinthians 8:4), an infinite, all-knowing Spirit (John 4:24), perfect in all His attributes, one in essence, eternally existing in three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14)—each equally deserving worship and obedience.

God the Father. We teach that God the Father, the first Person of the Trinity, orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace (Psalm 145:8–9; 1 Corinthians 8:6). He is the Creator of all things (Genesis 1:1–31; Ephesians 3:9). As the only absolute and omnipotent Ruler in the universe, He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption (Psalm 103:19; Romans 11:36). His fatherhood involves both His designation within the Trinity and His relationship with mankind. As Creator



He is Father to all men (Ephesians 4:6), but He is spiritual Father only to believers (Romans 8:14; 2 Corinthians 6:18). He has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass (Ephesians 1:11). He continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and events (1 Chronicles 29:11). In His sovereignty He is neither the author nor approver of sin (Habakkuk 1:13; John 8:38–47), nor does He abridge the accountability of moral, intelligent creatures (1 Peter 1:17). He has graciously chosen from eternity past those whom He would have as His own (Ephesians 1:4–6); He saves from sin all who come to Him through Jesus Christ; He adopts as His own all those who come to Him; and He becomes, upon adoption, Father to His own (John 1:12; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:5; Hebrews 12:5–9).

God the Son. We teach that Jesus Christ, the second Person of the Trinity, possesses all the divine excellencies, and in these He is coequal, consubstantial, and coeternal with the Father (John 10:30; 14:9).

We teach that God the Father created according to His own will, through His Son, Jesus Christ, by whom all things continue in existence and in operation (John 1:3; Colossians 1:15–17; Hebrews 1:2).

We teach that in the incarnation the eternal Son, the second Person of the Trinity, without altering His divine nature or surrendering any of the divine attributes, made Himself of no reputation by taking on a full human nature consubstantial with our own, yet without sin (Philippians 2:5–8; Hebrews 4:15; 7:26).

We teach that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the virgin Mary (Luke 1:35) and thus born of a woman (Galatians 4:4–5), so that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, the divine and the human, were joined together in one person, without confusion, change, division, or separation. He is therefore very God and very man, yet one Christ, the only mediator between God and man.

We teach that in His incarnation, Christ fully possessed His divine nature, attributes, and prerogatives (Colossians 2:9; cf. Luke 5:18–26; John 16:30; 20:28). However, in the state of His humiliation, He did not always fully express the glories of His majesty, concealing them behind the veil of His genuine humanity (Matthew 17:2; Mark 13:32; Philippians 2:5–8). According to His human nature, He acts in submission to the Father (John 4:34; 5:19, 30; 6:38) by the power of Holy Spirit (Isaiah 42:1; Matthew 12:28; Luke 4:1, 14), while, according to His divine nature, He acts by His authority and power as the eternal Son (John 1:14; cf. 2:11; 10:37–38; 14:10–11).

We teach that the purpose of the incarnation was to reveal God, redeem men, and rule over God's kingdom (Psalm 2:7–9; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:29; Philippians 2:9–11; Hebrews 7:25–26; 1 Peter 1:18–19).

We teach that our Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through the shedding of His blood and sacrificial death on the cross and that His death was voluntary, vicarious, substitutionary, propitiatory, and redemptive (John 10:15; Romans 3:24–25; 5:8; 1 Peter 2:24).



We teach that on the basis of the efficacy of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, the believing sinner is freed from the punishment, the penalty, the power, and one day the very presence of sin; and that he is declared righteous, given eternal life, and adopted into the family of God (Romans 3:25; 5:8–9; 2 Corinthians 5:14–15; 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18).

We teach that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead and that He is now ascended to the right hand of the Father, where He now mediates as our Advocate and High Priest (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:38–39; Acts 2:30–31; Romans 4:25; 8:34; Hebrews 7:25; 9:24; 1 John 2:1).

We teach that in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave, God confirmed the deity of His Son and gave proof that God has accepted the atoning work of Christ on the cross. Jesus' bodily resurrection is also the guarantee of a future resurrection life for all believers (John 5:26–29; 14:19; Romans 1:4; 4:25; 6:5–10; 1 Corinthians 15:20, 23).

We teach that Jesus Christ will return to receive the church, which is His Body, unto Himself at the rapture, and returning with His church in glory, will establish His millennial kingdom on earth (Acts 1:9–11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18; Revelation 20).

We teach that the Lord Jesus Christ is the One through whom God will judge all mankind (John 5:22–23):

- Believers (1 Corinthians 3:10–15; 2 Corinthians 5:10)
- Living inhabitants of the earth at His glorious return (Matthew 25:31–46)
- Unbelieving dead at the Great White Throne (Revelation 20:11–15)

As the Mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5), the Head of His Body the church (Ephesians 1:22; 5:23; Colossians 1:18), and the coming universal King, who will reign on the throne of David (Isaiah 9:6; Luke 1:31–33), He is the final Judge of all who fail to place their trust in Him as Lord and Saviour (Matthew 25:14–46; Acts 17:30–31).

God the Holy Spirit. We teach that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person, eternal, underived, possessing all the attributes of personality and deity, including intellect (1 Corinthians 2:10–13), emotions (Ephesians 4:30), will (1 Corinthians 12:11), eternality (Hebrews 9:14), omnipresence (Psalm 139:7–10), omniscience (Isaiah 40:13–14), omnipotence (Romans 15:13), and truthfulness (John 16:13). In all the divine attributes He is coequal and consubstantial with the Father and the Son (Matthew 28:19; Acts 5:3–4; 28:25–26; 1 Corinthians 12:4–6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Jeremiah 31:31–34 with Hebrews 10:15–17).

We teach that it is the work of the Holy Spirit to execute the divine will with relation to all mankind. We recognise His sovereign activity in creation (Genesis 1:2), the incarnation (Matthew 1:18), the written revelation (2 Peter 1:20–21), and the work of salvation (John 3:5–7).

We teach that the work of the Holy Spirit in this age began at Pentecost, when He came from the Father as promised by Christ (John 14:16–17; 15:26) to initiate and complete the building of the Body of Christ, which is His church (1 Corinthians 12:13). The broad scope of His divine activity includes convicting the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ and transforming believers into the image of Christ (John 16:7–9; Acts 1:5; 2:4; Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 2:22).



We teach that the Holy Spirit is the supernatural and sovereign Agent in regeneration, baptising all believers into the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13). The Holy Spirit also indwells, sanctifies, instructs, empowers them for service, and seals them unto the day of redemption (Romans 8:9; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Ephesians 1:13).

We teach that the Holy Spirit is the divine Teacher, who guided the apostles and prophets into all truth as they committed to writing God's revelation, the Bible (2 Peter 1:19–21). Every believer possesses the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit from the moment of salvation, and it is the duty of all those born of the Spirit to be filled with (controlled by) the Spirit (John 16:13; Romans 8:9; Ephesians 5:18; 1 John 2:20, 27).

We teach that the Holy Spirit administers spiritual gifts to the church. The Holy Spirit glorifies neither Himself nor His gifts by ostentatious displays, but He does glorify Christ by implementing His work of redeeming the lost and building up believers in the most holy faith (John 16:13–14; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 12:4–11; 2 Corinthians 3:18).

We teach, in this respect, that God the Holy Spirit is sovereign in the bestowing of all His gifts for the perfecting of the saints today, and that speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles in the beginning days of the church were for the purpose of pointing to and authenticating the apostles as revealers of divine truth, and were never intended to be characteristic of the lives of believers (1 Corinthians 12:4–11; 13:8–10; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 4:7–12; Hebrews 2:1–4).

Man

We teach that man was directly and immediately created by God in His image and likeness. Man was created free of sin with a rational nature, intelligence, volition, self-determination, and moral responsibility to God (Genesis 2:7, 15–25; James 3:9).

We teach that God's intention in the creation of man was that man should glorify God, enjoy God's fellowship, live his life in the will of God, and by this accomplish God's purpose for man in the world (Isaiah 43:7; Colossians 1:16; Revelation 4:11).

We teach that God created the human race as either male or female (Genesis 1:27), and that marriage is a divinely originated institution consisting only of a heterosexual union between a genetic male and a genetic female (Genesis 2:21–24; Matthew 19:4–6; Colossians 3:18–19).

We teach that in Adam's sin of disobedience to the revealed will and Word of God, man lost his innocence, incurred the penalty of spiritual and physical death, became subject to the wrath of God, and became inherently corrupt and utterly incapable of choosing or doing that which is acceptable to God apart from divine grace. With no recuperative powers to enable him to recover himself, man is hopelessly lost. Man's salvation is thereby wholly of God's grace through the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ (Genesis 2:16–17; 3:1–19; John 3:36; Romans 3:23; 6:23; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Ephesians 2:1–3; 1 Timothy 2:13–14; 1 John 1:8).

We teach that, because all men were in Adam, a nature corrupted by Adam's sin has been transmitted to all men of all ages, Jesus Christ being the only exception. All men are thus sinners by nature, by choice, and by divine declaration (Psalm 14:1–3; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:9–18, 23; 5:10–12).



Salvation

We teach that salvation is wholly of God by grace on the basis of the redemption of Jesus Christ, the merit of His shed blood, and not on the basis of human merit or works (John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8–10; 1 Peter 1:18–19).

Regeneration. We teach that regeneration is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit by which the divine nature and divine life are given (John 3:3–7; Titus 3:5). It is instantaneous and is accomplished solely by the power of the Holy Spirit through the instrumentality of the Word of God (John 5:24) when the repentant sinner, as enabled by the Holy Spirit, responds in faith to the divine provision of salvation. Genuine regeneration is manifested by fruits worthy of repentance as demonstrated in righteous attitudes and conduct. Good works are the proper evidence and fruit of regeneration (1 Corinthians 6:19–20; Ephesians 2:10), and will be experienced to the extent that the believer submits to the control of the Holy Spirit in his life through faithful obedience to the Word of God (Ephesians 5:17–21; Philippians 2:12b; Colossians 3:16; 2 Peter 1:4–10). This obedience causes the believer to be increasingly conformed to the image of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18).

Such a conformity is climaxed in the believer's glorification at Christ's coming (Romans 8:17; 2 Peter 1:4; 1 John 3:2–3).

Election. We teach that election is the act of God by which, before the foundation of the world, He chose in Christ those whom He graciously regenerates, saves, and sanctifies (Romans 8:28–30; Ephesians 1:4–11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 2:10; 1 Peter 1:1–2).

We teach that sovereign election does not contradict or negate the responsibility of man to repent and trust Christ as Saviour and Lord (Ezekiel 18:23, 32; 33:11; John 3:18–19, 36; 5:40; Romans 9:22–23; 2 Thessalonians 2:10–12; Revelation 22:17). Nevertheless, since sovereign grace includes the means of receiving the gift of salvation as well as the gift itself, sovereign election will result in what God determines. All whom the Father calls to Himself will come in faith, and all who come in faith the Father will receive (John 6:37–40, 44; Acts 13:48; James 4:8).

We teach that the unmerited favour that God grants to totally depraved sinners is not related to any initiative of their own part or to God's anticipation of what they might do by their own will, but is solely of His sovereign grace and mercy (Ephesians 1:4–7; Titus 3:4–7; 1 Peter 1:2).

We teach that election should not be looked upon as based merely on abstract sovereignty. God is truly sovereign, but He exercises this sovereignty in harmony with His other attributes, especially His omniscience, justice, holiness, wisdom, grace, and love (Romans 9:11–16). This sovereignty will always exalt the will of God in a manner totally consistent with His character as revealed in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 11:25–28; 2 Timothy 1:9).



Justification. We teach that justification before God is an act of God (Romans 8:33) by which He declares righteous those who, through faith in Christ, repent of their sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 11:18; Romans 2:4; 2 Corinthians 7:10; Isaiah 55:6–7) and confess Him as sovereign Lord

(Romans 10:9–10; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 2 Corinthians 4:5; Philippians 2:11). This righteousness is apart from any virtue or work of man (Romans 3:20; 4:6) and involves the imputation of our sins to Christ (Colossians 2:14; 1 Peter 2:24) and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us (1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21). By this means God is enabled to “be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus” (Romans 3:26).

Sanctification. We teach that every believer is sanctified (set apart) unto God by justification and is therefore declared to be holy and is therefore identified as a saint. This sanctification is positional and instantaneous and should not be confused with progressive sanctification. This sanctification has to do with the believer's standing, not his present walk or condition (Acts 20:32; 1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 6:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 2:11; 3:1; 10:10, 14; 13:12; 1 Peter 1:2).

We teach that there is also, by the work of the Holy Spirit, a progressive sanctification by which the state of the believer is brought closer to the standing the believer positionally enjoys through justification. Through obedience to the Word of God and the empowering of the Holy Spirit, the believer is able to live a life of increasing holiness in conformity to the will of God, becoming more and more like our Lord Jesus Christ (John 17:17, 19; Romans 6:1–22; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Thessalonians 4:3–4; 5:23).

In this respect, we teach that every saved person is involved in a daily conflict—the new creation in Christ doing battle against the flesh—but adequate provision is made for victory through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. The struggle nevertheless stays with the believer all through this earthly life and is never completely ended. All claims to the eradication of sin in this life are unscriptural. Eradication of sin is not possible, but the Holy Spirit does provide for victory over sin (Galatians 5:16–25; Ephesians 4:22–24; Philippians 3:12; Colossians 3:9–10; 1 Peter 1:14–16; 1 John 3:5–9).

Security. We teach that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever (John 5:24; 6:37–40; 10:27–30; Romans 5:9–10; 8:1, 31–39; 1 Corinthians 1:4–8; Ephesians 4:30; Hebrews 7:25; 13:5; 1 Peter 1:5; Jude 24).

We teach that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word, which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion for sinful living and carnality (Romans 6:15–22; 13:13–14; Galatians 5:13, 25–26; Titus 2:11–14).

Separation. We teach that separation from sin is clearly called for throughout the Old and New Testaments, and that the Scriptures clearly indicate that in the last days apostasy and worldliness shall increase (2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1; 2 Timothy 3:1–5).



We teach that, out of deep gratitude for the undeserved grace of God granted to us, and because our glorious God is so worthy of our total consecration, all the saved should live in such a manner as to demonstrate our adoring love to God and so as not to bring reproach upon our Lord and Saviour. We also teach that separation from all religious apostasy and worldly and sinful practices is commanded of us by God (Romans 12:1–2, 1 Corinthians 5:9–13; 2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1; 1 John 2:15–17; 2 John 9–11).

We teach that believers should be separated unto our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thessalonians 1:11–12; Hebrews 12:1–2) and affirm that the Christian life is a life of obedient righteousness that reflects the teaching of the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:2–12) and a continual pursuit of holiness (Romans 12:1–2; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Hebrews 12:14; Titus 2:11–14; 1 John 3:1–10).

The Church

We teach that all who place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately placed by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual Body, the church (1 Corinthians 12:12–13), the bride of Christ (2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:23–32; Revelation 19:7–8), of which Christ is the Head (Ephesians 1:22; 4:15; Colossians 1:18).

We teach that the formation of the church, the Body of Christ, began on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1–21, 38–47) and will be completed at the coming of Christ for His own at the rapture (1 Corinthians 15:51–52; 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18).

We teach that the church is thus a unique spiritual organism designed by Christ, made up of all born-again believers in this present age (Ephesians 2:11–3:6). The church is distinct from Israel (1 Corinthians 10:32), a mystery not revealed until this age (Ephesians 3:1–6; 5:32).

We teach that the establishment and continuity of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures (Acts 14:23, 27; 20:17, 28; Galatians 1:2; Philippians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1) and that the members of the one spiritual Body are directed to associate themselves together in local assemblies (1 Corinthians 11:18–20; Hebrews 10:25).

We teach that the one supreme authority for the church is Christ (1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18) and that church leadership, gifts, order, discipline, and worship are all appointed through His sovereignty as found in the Scriptures. The biblically designated officers serving under Christ and over the assembly are elders (also called bishops, overseers, or pastors; Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11) and deacons, both of whom must meet biblical qualifications (1 Timothy 3:1–13; Titus 1:5–9; 1 Peter 5:1–5).

We teach that these leaders lead or rule as servants of Christ (1 Timothy 5:17–22) and have His authority in directing the church. The congregation is to submit to their leadership (Hebrews 13:7, 17).

We teach the importance of discipleship (Matthew 28:19–20; 2 Timothy 2:2), mutual accountability of all believers to each other (Matthew 18:5–14), as well as the need for discipline of sinning members of the congregation in accord with the standards of



Scripture (Matthew 18:15–22; Acts 5:1–11; 1 Corinthians 5:1–13; 2 Thessalonians 3:6–15; 1 Timothy 1:19–20; Titus 1:10–16).

We teach the autonomy of the local church, free from any external authority or control, with the right of self-government and freedom from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organisations (Titus 1:5). We teach that it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other for the presentation and propagation of the faith. Each local church, however, through its elders and their interpretation and application of Scripture, should be the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation. The elders should determine all other matters of membership, policy, discipline, benevolence, and government as well (Acts 15:19–31; 20:28; 1 Corinthians 5:4–7, 13; 1 Peter 5:1–4).

We teach that the purpose of the church is to glorify God (Ephesians 3:21) by building itself up in the faith (Ephesians 4:13–16), by instruction of the Word (2 Timothy 2:2, 15; 3:16–17), by fellowship (Acts 2:47; 1 John 1:3), by keeping the ordinances (Luke 22:19; Acts 2:38–42) and by advancing and communicating the gospel to the entire world (Matthew 28:19; Acts 1:8; 2:42).

We teach the calling of all saints to the work of service (1 Corinthians 15:58; Ephesians 4:12; Revelation 22:12).

We teach the need of the church to cooperate with God as He accomplishes His purpose in the world. To that end, He gives the church spiritual gifts. He gives men chosen for the purpose of equipping the saints for the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:7–12), and He also gives unique and special spiritual abilities to each member of the Body of Christ (Romans 12:5–8; 1 Corinthians 12:4–31; 1 Peter 4:10–11).

We teach that there were two kinds of gifts given the early church: miraculous gifts of divine revelation and healing, given temporarily in the apostolic era for the purpose of confirming the authenticity of the apostles' message (Hebrews 2:3–4; 2 Corinthians 12:12); and ministering gifts, given to equip believers for edifying one another. With the New Testament revelation now complete, Scripture becomes the sole test of the authenticity of a man's message, and confirming gifts of a miraculous nature are no longer necessary to validate a man or his message (1 Corinthians 13:8–12). Miraculous gifts can even be counterfeited by Satan so as to deceive even believers (1 Corinthians 13:13–14:12; Revelation 13:13–14). The only gifts in operation today are those non-revelatory equipping gifts given for edification (Romans 12:6–8).

We teach that no one possesses the gift of healing today, but that God does hear and answer the prayer of faith and will answer in accordance with His own perfect will for the sick, suffering, and afflicted (Luke 18:1–6; John 5:7–9; 2 Corinthians 12:6–10; James 5:13–16; 1 John 5:14–15).

We teach that two ordinances have been committed to the local church: baptism and the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:38–42). Christian baptism by immersion (Acts 8:36–39) is the solemn and beautiful testimony of a believer showing forth his faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, and his union with Him in death to sin and resurrection to a new life (Romans 6:1–11). It is also a sign of fellowship and identification with the visible Body of Christ (Acts 2:41–42).



We teach that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration and proclamation of His death until He comes, and should be always preceded by solemn self-examination (1 Corinthians 11:28–32). We also teach that, whereas the elements of Communion are only representative of the flesh and blood of Christ, participation in the Lord's Supper is nevertheless an actual communion with the risen Christ, who indwells every believer, and so is present, fellowshiping with His people (1 Corinthians 10:16).

Angels

Holy Angels. We teach that angels are created beings and are therefore not to be worshiped. Although they are a higher order of creation than man, they are created to serve God and to worship Him (Luke 2:9–14; Hebrews 1:6–7, 14; 2:6–7; Revelation 5:11–14; 19:10; 22:9).

Fallen Angels. We teach that Satan is a created angel and the author of sin. He incurred the judgment of God by rebelling against his Creator (Isaiah 14:12–17; Ezekiel 28:11–19), by taking numerous angels with him in his fall (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 12:1–14), and by introducing sin into the human race by his temptation of Eve (Genesis 3:1–15).

We teach that Satan is the open and declared enemy of God and man (Isaiah 14:13–14; Matthew 4:1–11; Revelation 12:9–10); that he is the prince of this world, who has been defeated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Romans 16:20); and that he shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire (Isaiah 14:12–17; Ezekiel 28:11–19; Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10).

Last Things

Death. We teach that physical death involves no loss of our immaterial consciousness (Revelation 6:9–11), that the soul of the redeemed passes immediately into the presence of Christ (Luke 23:43; Philippians 1:23; 2 Corinthians 5:8), that there is a separation of soul and body (Philippians 1:21–24), and that, for the redeemed, such separation will continue until the rapture (1 Thessalonians 4:13–17), which initiates the first resurrection (Revelation 20:4–6), when our soul and body will be reunited to be glorified forever with our Lord (Philippians 3:21; 1 Corinthians 15:35–44, 50–54). Until that time, the souls of the redeemed in Christ remain in joyful fellowship with our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:8).

We teach the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life (John 6:39; Romans 8:10–11, 19–23; 2 Corinthians 4:14), and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment (Daniel 12:2; John 5:29; Revelation 20:13–15).

We teach that the souls of the unsaved at death are kept under punishment until the second resurrection (Luke 16:19–26; Revelation 20:13–15), when the soul and the resurrection body will be united (John 5:28–29). They shall then appear at the Great White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:11–15) and shall be cast into hell, the lake of



fire (Matthew 25:41–46), cut off from the life of God forever (Daniel 12:2; Matthew 25:41–46; 2 Thessalonians 1:7–9).

The Rapture of the Church. We teach the personal, bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ before the seven-year tribulation (1 Thessalonians 4:16; Titus 2:13) to translate His church from this earth (John 14:1–3; 1 Corinthians 15:51–53; 1 Thessalonians 4:15–5:11) and, between this event and His glorious return with His saints, to reward believers according to their works (1 Corinthians 3:11–15; 2 Corinthians 5:10).

The Tribulation Period. We teach that immediately following the removal of the church from the earth (John 14:1–3; 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18) the righteous judgments of God will be poured out upon an unbelieving world (Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 9:27; 12:1; 2 Thessalonians 2:7–12; Revelation 16), and that these judgments will be climaxed by the return of Christ in glory to the earth (Matthew 24:27–31; 25:31–46; 2 Thessalonians 2:7–12). At that time the Old Testament and tribulation saints will be raised and the living will be judged (Daniel 12:2–3; Revelation 20:4–6). This period includes the seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy (Daniel 9:24–27; Matthew 24:15–31; 25:31–46).

The Second Coming and the Millennial Reign. We teach that, after the tribulation period, Christ will come to earth to occupy the throne of David (Matthew 25:31; Luke 1:31–33; Acts 1:10–11; 2:29–30) and establish His messianic kingdom for 1,000 years on the earth (Revelation 20:1–7). During this time the resurrected saints will reign with Him over Israel and all the nations of the earth (Ezekiel 37:21–28; Daniel 7:17–22; Revelation 19:11–16). This reign will be preceded by the overthrow of the Antichrist and the False Prophet, and by the removal of Satan from the world (Daniel 7:17–27; Revelation 20:1–7).

We teach that the kingdom itself will be the fulfilment of God's promise to Israel (Isaiah 65:17–25; Ezekiel 37:21–28; Zechariah 8:1–17) to restore them to the land that they forfeited through their disobedience (Deuteronomy 28:15–68). The result of their disobedience was that Israel was temporarily set aside (Matthew 21:43; Romans 11:1–26), but will again be awakened through repentance to enter into the land of blessing (Jeremiah 31:31–34; Ezekiel 36:22–32; Romans 11:25–29).

We teach that this time of our Lord's reign will be characterised by harmony, justice, peace, righteousness, and long life (Isaiah 11; 65:17–25; Ezekiel 36:33–38), and will be brought to an end with the release of Satan (Revelation 20:7).

The Judgment of the Lost. We teach that following the release of Satan after the 1,000-year reign of Christ (Revelation 20:7), Satan will deceive the nations of the earth and gather them to battle against the saints and the beloved city, at which time Satan and his army will be devoured by fire from heaven (Revelation 20:9). Following this, Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10), whereupon Christ, who is the Judge of all men (John 5:22), will resurrect and judge the great and small at the Great White Throne Judgment.



We teach that this resurrection of the unsaved dead to judgment will be a physical resurrection, whereupon receiving their judgment (John 5:28–29), they will be committed to an eternal conscious punishment in the lake of fire (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:11–15).

Eternity. We teach that after the closing of the millennium, the temporary release of Satan, and the judgment of unbelievers (2 Thessalonians 1:9; Revelation 20:7–15), the saved will enter the eternal state of glory with God, after which the elements of this earth are to be dissolved (2 Peter 3:10) and replaced with a new earth, wherein only righteousness dwells (Ephesians 5:5; Revelation 20:15; 21:1–27; 22:1–21). Following this, the heavenly city will come down out of heaven (Revelation 21:2) and will be the dwelling place of the saints, where they will enjoy forever fellowship with God and one another (John 17:3; Revelation 21–22). Our Lord Jesus Christ, having fulfilled His redemptive mission, will then deliver up the kingdom to God the Father (1 Corinthians 15:24–28), that in all spheres the triune God may reign forever and ever (1 Corinthians 15:28).

What It Means To Be a Christian

Being a Christian is more than identifying yourself with a particular religion or affirming a certain value system. Being a Christian means you have embraced what the Bible says about God, mankind, and salvation. Consider the following truths found in Scripture.

God Is Sovereign Creator. Contemporary thinking says man is the product of evolution. But the Bible says we were created by a personal God to love, serve, and enjoy endless fellowship with Him. The New Testament reveals it was Jesus Himself who created everything (John 1:3; Colossians 1:16). Therefore, He also owns and rules everything (Psalm 103:19). That means He has authority over our lives and we owe Him absolute allegiance, obedience, and worship.

God Is Holy. God is absolutely and perfectly holy (Isaiah 6:3), therefore He cannot commit or approve of evil (James 1:13). God requires holiness of us as well. First Peter 1:16 says, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

Mankind Is Sinful. According to Scripture, everyone is guilty of sin: "There is no man who does not sin" (1 Kings 8:46). That doesn't mean we're incapable of performing acts of human kindness. But we're utterly incapable of understanding, loving, or pleasing God on our own. (Romans 3:10–12).

Sin Demands a Penalty. God's holiness and justice demand that all sin be punished by death: (Ezekiel 18:4). That's why simply changing our patterns of behaviour can't solve our sin problem or eliminate its consequences.



STEADFAST
BIBLE CHURCH

Jesus Is Lord and Saviour. Romans 10:9 says, “If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved.” Even though God’s justice demands death for sin, His love has provided a Saviour who paid the penalty and died for sinners (1 Peter 3:18). Christ’s death satisfied the demands of God’s justice and Christ’s perfect, sinless life satisfied the demands of God’s holiness (2 Corinthians 5:21), thereby enabling Him to forgive and save those who place their faith in Him (Romans 3:26).

The Character of Saving Faith. True faith is always accompanied by repentance from sin. Repentance is agreeing with God that you are sinful, confessing your sins to Him, and making a conscious choice to turn from sin (Luke 13:3,5; 1 Thessalonians 1:9) and pursue Christ (Matthew 11:28–30; John 17:3) and obedience to Him (1 John 2:3). It isn’t enough to believe certain facts about Christ. Even Satan and his demons believe in the true God (James 2:19), but they don’t love and obey Him. True saving faith always responds in obedience (Ephesians 2:10).



STATEMENT ON HERMENEUTICS¹

Originally produced by The Master's Seminary Faculty
The Master's Seminary Journal 37, no. 1 (Spring 2026)

* * * * *

Articles I–X: Concerning Scripture
Articles XI–XVII: Concerning Hermeneutics
Articles XVIII–XX: Concerning Historical Backgrounds and Biblical Languages
Articles XXI–XXIV: Concerning Exegesis
Articles XXV–XXIX: Concerning Biblical Theology
Articles XXX–XXXIII: Concerning Systematic and Historical Theology
Article XXXIV: Concerning Pastoral Ministry and Counseling
Article XXXV: Concerning Exposition

* * * * *

CONCERNING SCRIPTURE

ARTICLE I: THE NATURE OF SCRIPTURE

WE AFFIRM that Scripture, the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, is God's sole written revelation to man.²

WE DENY that Scripture is merely a witness to revelation, becomes revelation only when encountered, or depends on the responses of men for its validity.³

¹ Portions of this document are taken or adapted from the Chicago Statements on biblical inerrancy and biblical hermeneutics. Sentences marked "taken from" are quotations, with, on rare occasion, minor modifications. Sentences marked "adapted from" maintain much of the original wording, but with certain words exchanged or added for greater precision and clarity of expression. See "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 21, no. 4 (Dec 1978): 289–96; and "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 25, no. 4 (Dec 1982): 397–401.

² 1 Cor 2:7–14; 2 Tim 3:16–17; 2 Pet 1:20–21.

³ Adapted from "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy," Article III.

ARTICLE II: THE INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE

WE AFFIRM that Scripture is objective, propositional revelation, and that it, in its whole and in every word, is inspired by God in the text that the prophets and the apostles wrote, that is, in the original autographs.⁴

WE DENY that inspiration can be limited to human insight or heightened states of consciousness, or that it pertains merely to the general ideas of Scripture.⁵

ARTICLE III: THE DUAL AUTHORSHIP AND SINGLE MEANING OF SCRIPTURE

WE AFFIRM that God revealed Himself in Scripture through a process of dual authorship, wherein the Holy Spirit superintended the human authors such that their own writing perfectly conveyed God's Word to man—without error in the whole or in part.⁶ We affirm that the biblical writers, being so moved by God, intended and revealed theological truth in all that they wrote, writing to instruct both immediate and subsequent audiences.⁷ We also affirm that all that they recorded is profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness.⁸ We further affirm that this harmonious intent between the divine and the human authors is the single meaning of the biblical text.

WE DENY the legitimacy of any methodology that reduces Scripture to a merely human book, thereby rejecting it as supernatural revelation of divine truth. We deny that God, in causing these writers to use the very words He chose, overrode their personalities, literary styles, or manners of speaking.⁹ We also deny that human language is so limited by our finitude that it is unable to express adequately divine revelation.¹⁰

Though we affirm that the biblical authors did not always understand the full significance of their writings,¹¹ we deny that any biblical author was ignorant of the meaning of his writing. We deny that God intended a deeper meaning (i.e., *sensus plenior*) than what He superintended the human author to convey. We further deny that the intended meaning of any text changed as further revelation was given.

ARTICLE IV: THE INERRANCY OF SCRIPTURE

WE AFFIRM that Scripture in its original autographs was free from affirming anything untrue or contrary to fact.¹²

⁴ 2 Tim 3:16.

⁵ Adapted from "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy," Article VII.

⁶ 2 Pet 1:21; see Eccl 12:9–11.

⁷ Pss 22:30–31; 102:18; Rom 15:4; 1 Pet 1:12.

⁸ 2 Tim 3:16.

⁹ Adapted from "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy," Article VIII.

¹⁰ Adapted from "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy," Article IV.

¹¹ Adapted from "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics," Article XVIII. See 1 Pet 1:10–11.

¹² Adapted from "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy," Article XI.

WE DENY that Scripture's infallibility and inerrancy are limited to spiritual or religious themes.¹³ 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 rounded numbers, the topical arrangement of material, variant selections of material in parallel accounts, or the use of paraphrased citations.¹⁴

ARTICLE V: THE CLARITY AND SIMPLICITY OF SCRIPTURE

WE AFFIRM that because God revealed Himself in Scripture through human language, the meaning of all Scripture is accessible to those who are regenerated and illumined by the Holy Spirit.¹⁵ We further affirm that a believer is not dependent on the expertise of biblical teachers and scholars to understand the Scripture.¹⁶

WE DENY that the meaning of Scripture is simplistic or that the meaning of each passage is equally easy to discern as that of another.¹⁷ We further deny that a believer should ignore the fruits of study by pastors and teachers who are given by God for the church's edification.¹⁸

ARTICLE VI: THE AUTHORITY AND SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE

WE AFFIRM that because Scripture alone is both infallible and inerrant, it is also the sufficient and final authority for all life and godliness, including all human intellectual endeavors and concepts.¹⁹ We affirm that while Scripture does not address or contribute knowledge to all matters of human knowledge or experience, it nonetheless enables and guides those pursuits.

WE DENY that any human tradition or experience is equal to Scripture.²⁰

ARTICLE VII: THE CANON OF SCRIPTURE

WE AFFIRM that the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments are the complete written record of God's revelation that He intended to give to His people, and to which they are accountable. We further affirm that each of these books is canonical because each book was written by a prophet or an apostle.²¹

¹³ Adapted from "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy," Article XII. Cf. Isa 55:11; 2 Tim 3:16–17; 2 Pet 1:3–4.

¹⁴ Taken from "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy," Article XIII.

¹⁵ Deut 30:11–14 (cf. Rom 10:6–8); Rom 1:18–19; 1 Cor 2:14–15.

¹⁶ Adapted from "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics," Article XXIV.

¹⁷ 2 Pet 3:16.

¹⁸ Eph 4:11–12.

¹⁹ Deut 6:6–7; Ps 19:7–11; Zech 7:12; Matt 5:18; 24:35; John 10:35; 16:12–13; 17:17; 1 Cor 2:13; 2 Tim 3:15–17; Heb 4:12; 2 Pet 1:3, 20–21; Rev 3:8.

²⁰ 2 Pet 1:19.

²¹ Heb 1:1–2; 2:2–3; 2 Pet 3:2; see Rom 1:1–2; Luke 11:49; 1 Tim 5:18.

WE DENY that at any time the church, any council, or any human institution decided which books were to be in the canon.

ARTICLE VIII: THE POWER OF SCRIPTURE

WE AFFIRM that Scripture, through the agency of the Holy Spirit, always achieves its divinely intended purpose, whether the salvation of the elect or the condemnation of sinners. We affirm that Scripture is active, certain, powerful, living, cleansing, nourishing, transforming, and sanctifying.²²

WE DENY that Scripture is akin to any other work of human literature, of which all are finite and fallible. We further deny that the hearer's failure to respond to the Scripture's meaning diminishes the Scripture's efficaciousness.

ARTICLE IX: THE PRESERVATION OF SCRIPTURE

WE AFFIRM that inspiration and inerrancy apply only to the original writings of Scripture. We affirm that God, beginning with His specific instructions to preserve His Word,²³ has providentially ensured that none of the original reading of Scripture has been lost, but that any portion of the text can be recognized by comparing manuscript copies with each other.²⁴

WE DENY that every manuscript is necessarily a perfect copy of the original. We further deny that any text tradition or translation is necessarily a perfect replication of the original. We also deny that any element of the Christian faith is affected by the absence of the autographs.²⁵

ARTICLE X: THE WRITTEN WORD AND THE INCARNATE WORD

WE AFFIRM that Christ Himself, the Word of God incarnate, affirmed Scripture as inspired, inerrant, clear, authoritative, and powerful.²⁶ We affirm that He declared the entire Old Testament to be the Word of God, recognizing its preservation. We affirm that He pre-authenticated the New Testament as Scripture.²⁷ We also affirm that the normative authority of Scripture is the authority of God Himself as attested by Jesus Christ, the Lord of the church.²⁸

²² Ps 19:7–9; Isa 55:10–11; Luke 16:17; John 6:63; 17:17–19; Rom 1:16–17; 1 Cor 1:18; Eph 5:26; 1 Thess 2:13; 2 Tim 3:16–17; Heb 4:12; 1 Pet 1:23; 2:2.

²³ Exod 17:14; 24:4; 34:27–28; Deut 17:18–22; 31:9, 22; Matt 5:18; 24:35; Luke 16:17.

²⁴ Adapted from “The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy,” Article X. Cf. Isa 40:8; Matt 4:4; 5:18; Luke 4:4; 16:17; 21:33; 1 Pet 1:23–25.

²⁵ Adapted from “The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy,” Article X.

²⁶ Matt 5:18–19; Luke 16:17.

²⁷ John 16:12–15.

²⁸ Adapted from “The Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics,” Article I.

WE DENY the legitimacy of separating the authority of Christ from the authority of Scripture, or of opposing the one to the other.²⁹ We further deny that the human character of Scripture corrupts its divine infallibility or inerrancy, just as the human nature of Christ does not corrupt His divinity or call His sinlessness into question.

CONCERNING HERMENEUTICS

ARTICLE XI: THE REGENERATING AND ILLUMINATING WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

WE AFFIRM that while Scripture is clear, because man suppresses the truth in unrighteousness, the Holy Spirit's regenerating work is necessary for the reader to discern accurately and embrace genuinely the message of Scripture. We further affirm that the Holy Spirit enables believers to discern the meaning of Scripture and to appropriate and apply it to their lives.³⁰

WE DENY that Scripture is linguistically incoherent to man.³¹ We further deny that general revelation is insufficient to reveal certain truths, such as the existence, power, and nature of God, even to those who culpably suppress those truths in unrighteousness.³²

ARTICLE XII: THE NATURE OF SINGLE MEANING

WE AFFIRM that given the confluent nature of inspiration, the meaning expressed in each biblical text is single, definite, static, and fixed to the human author's intent. We further affirm that an author's intent is inclusive of what he wrote, the occasion and purpose for writing, and his desired effects of his writing upon his readers.³³

WE DENY that the dual authorship of Scripture results in multiple meanings. We further deny that the recognition of this single meaning eliminates the variety of its applications or implications, that is, its significance.³⁴

ARTICLE XIII: THE LITERAL-GRAMMATICAL-HISTORICAL HERMENEUTIC

WE AFFIRM that, because God moved men to reveal His message in human language and in the contexts of time and space, the meaning of Scripture is to be found through the literal-grammatical-historical method of interpretation under the illumination of the Spirit.

²⁹ Taken from "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics," Article I.

³⁰ Adapted from "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics," Article V; Rom 1:18–21; 1 Cor 2:14.

³¹ Matt 12:3, 5; 19:4; 22:31; Mark 12:10, 26; Luke 6:3.

³² Rom 1:18–21.

³³ Adapted from "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics," Article VII.

³⁴ Adapted from "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics," Article VII.

WE DENY that any method in addition to the literal-grammatical-historical hermeneutic is necessary to determine the authorial intent of Scripture.

ARTICLE XIV: THE LITERAL PRINCIPLE

WE AFFIRM the literal sense of Scripture, which is the intent of the human author as superintended by the Holy Spirit. We further affirm that such intent is expressed by the normative grammar of the text, its literary context, and according to its historical setting, taking into account all figures of speech and literary forms found in the text.

WE DENY that an interpretation may be determined to be valid merely because it is linguistically possible. We further deny that the meaning of Scripture is in any way determined by the reader's preference or a community's tradition.

ARTICLE XV: THE GRAMMATICAL PRINCIPLE

WE AFFIRM the grammatical sense of Scripture, that the words of Scripture be understood according to the normal rules of human language as it was used at the time of the text's writing.

WE DENY the legitimacy of any method that violates the rules of human language.

ARTICLE XVI: THE HISTORICAL PRINCIPLE

WE AFFIRM the historical sense of Scripture, that Scripture be understood in light of the facts of history as the author appealed to and assumed them in his writing.

WE DENY that extra-biblical historical information can override what the author expressed grammatically, whether in his intent, historical claims, or implications.

ARTICLE XVII: THE SYNTHETIC PRINCIPLE

WE AFFIRM that, because Scripture is inerrant, no correct interpretation of one text can contradict the correct interpretation of another text of Scripture. We affirm that if a student of Scripture reaches an understanding of a passage that contradicts another passage in God's Word, that interpretation cannot be correct. We also affirm that texts of Scripture that speak of the same events or concepts can be harmonized.

WE DENY that every passage of Scripture is equally easy to interpret or that one passage can override the meaning of another passage of Scripture.³⁵

³⁵ 2 Pet 3:15–16.

CONCERNING HISTORICAL BACKGROUNDS AND BIBLICAL LANGUAGES

ARTICLE XVIII: THE USEFULNESS OF HISTORICAL BACKGROUNDS

WE AFFIRM that Scripture contains an inerrant record of events, discourses, and sayings which all correspond to historical fact.³⁶ We further affirm that, because Scripture is anchored to history, historical backgrounds of various kinds can be helpful to explain and illustrate what the author described.

WE DENY that Scripture's presentation of historical background is inaccurate or misleading. We further deny that extra-biblical historical information can supplant or correct what Scripture conveys grammatically, whether in its intent, historical claims, or implications.

ARTICLE XIX: THE IMPORTANCE OF BIBLICAL LANGUAGES

WE AFFIRM that the inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture pertain to its original autographs which were written in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. We affirm the usefulness of studying these languages to attain greater precision in understanding a passage. We further affirm that exegetical fallacies are committed when the original wording is interpreted outside the bounds of authorial intent and context.

WE DENY that the emphases of Scripture are inherently lost in translation and that knowledge of the original languages is required for the basic understanding of the meaning of Scripture. We deny that simply appealing to the original languages necessitates a correct interpretation of Scripture.

ARTICLE XX: THE USE OF BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

WE AFFIRM that, since the New Testament translates portions of the Old Testament, Scripture affirms the legitimacy of translation—that is, that translations of Scripture can communicate the divine intent of Scripture. We further affirm that translations, insofar as they express the wording and meaning of the original text, bear the derived accuracy and authority of the original text.

WE DENY that the meaning of any biblical text is so tied to the culture out of which it came that the understanding of the same meaning in other cultures is impossible.³⁷

³⁶ Adapted from "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics," Article XIV.

³⁷ Taken from "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics," Article XI.

CONCERNING EXEGESIS

ARTICLE XXI: THE NATURE OF EXEGESIS

WE AFFIRM that exegesis is the skillful application of the literal-grammatical-historical hermeneutic to the biblical text in the original languages, with a view to discerning the author's intended meaning.

WE DENY the legitimacy of any treatment of the biblical text, or any quest for sources lying behind it, that leads to relativizing, de-historicizing, or discounting its teaching, or to rejecting its claims regarding authorship.³⁸

ARTICLE XXII: THE RECOGNITION OF LITERARY FORMS

WE AFFIRM that knowledge of literary genres and authorial styles is profitable for proper exegesis.

WE DENY that biblical narratives that present themselves as factual can be understood as any literary form that would negate the historicity of those narratives. We deny that literary forms may be used to argue against the historical, miraculous, and supernatural assertions of Scripture. We further deny that human language was too limited for God to convey His message clearly and adequately in Scripture.³⁹ We also deny that genre suspends the literal-grammatical-historical hermeneutic.

ARTICLE XXIII: THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTEXT

WE AFFIRM that context is necessary for the student of Scripture to glean the rightful intent of the author. We affirm that context can include a passage's historical background, immediate literary context, and inter-textual context as constructed by the author. We affirm that previous revelation can inform the meaning of later revelation, and that later revelation can show the full significance of previous revelation.

WE DENY that context can undermine or contradict the assertions of any given passage. We deny the legitimacy of employing the context of later revelation to redefine the meaning of earlier revelation. However, we also deny the illegitimacy of employing the context of later revelation to understand the complete significance of earlier revelation.

³⁸ Taken from "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy," Article XVIII.

³⁹ Adapted from "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics," Article X.

ARTICLE XXIV: USE OF TEXTUAL CRITICAL TOOLS

WE AFFIRM that lower critical techniques, particularly pertaining to grammar, lexicography, and textual criticism, can be useful in ascertaining the original wording of the text and its meaning.⁴⁰

WE DENY any technique of higher criticism that questions the truth or integrity of the writer's expressed meaning or of any other scriptural teaching.⁴¹

CONCERNING BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

ARTICLE XXV: THE PROGRESSIVE REVELATION OF SCRIPTURE

WE AFFIRM that God's revelation in Scripture was progressive and accumulative, revealing compounding divine truth over time in many portions and ways, and speaking finally in His Son.⁴²

WE DENY that every detail of all divine revelation was necessarily given or known at every point of the progress of divine revelation. We also deny that progressive revelation necessarily precludes certain truths from being present in earlier revelation. We deny that later revelation, which may fulfill earlier revelation, ever corrects, contradicts, or reinterprets it. We further deny that any normative revelation has been given since the completion of the New Testament writings.⁴³ We deny that the meaning of any given text of Scripture evolves or changes over time, inasmuch as every text of Scripture is immutable.

ARTICLE XXVI: THE UNITY OF SCRIPTURE

WE AFFIRM the unity, harmony, and consistency of Scripture, providing a cohesive, interconnected, compounding, and complete revelation of God's character and plan. We affirm that Scripture is its own best interpreter, maintaining and incorporating earlier revelation while progressively bringing out further implications and weaving together themes that span the entire canon.⁴⁴

WE DENY that the complete revelation of God found in Scripture is exhaustive of all that is in God or His plan.⁴⁵ We further deny that Scripture may be interpreted in such a way as to suggest that one passage corrects or reinterprets another. We further deny that later writers of Scripture misinterpreted earlier

⁴⁰ Adapted from "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics," Article XVI.

⁴¹ Taken from "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics," Article XVI.

⁴² Heb 1:1–2.

⁴³ Adapted from "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy," Article V.

⁴⁴ Adapted from "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics," Article XVII.

⁴⁵ Deut 29:29.

passages of Scripture when quoting from or referring to them.⁴⁶ We further deny the legitimacy of inter-textual connections outside of the author's intent.

ARTICLE XXVII: THE NEW TESTAMENT USE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

WE AFFIRM that while the New Testament writers identify and draw out further significance from certain Old Testament texts, they do so in a manner consistent with the single meaning and original authorial intent of Old Testament writers.

WE DENY that the New Testament authors changed the meaning of any Old Testament text.

ARTICLE XXVIII: THE INTERPRETATION OF BIBLICAL PROPHECY

WE AFFIRM that the literal-grammatical-historical method of interpretation should be applied consistently to biblical prophecy.

WE DENY that progressive revelation reinterprets earlier prophecies, detracting from their literal and physical fulfillment. We deny that the genre of prophecy suspends the literal-grammatical-historical hermeneutic.

ARTICLE XXIX: THE CENTRALITY OF CHRIST

WE AFFIRM the centrality of the Person and work of Christ in Scripture.⁴⁷ We affirm that every passage of Scripture ultimately connects with Christ in that every passage of Scripture reveals an aspect of God's redemptive plan, which culminates in Christ.

WE DENY that every passage of Scripture, properly interpreted, directly refers to the Person and work of Christ.

CONCERNING SYSTEMATIC AND HISTORICAL THEOLOGY

ARTICLE XXX: GENERAL AND SPECIAL REVELATION

WE AFFIRM the harmony of special revelation with general revelation and therefore of biblical teaching with the facts of nature.⁴⁸ We further affirm the authoritative priority of special revelation over general revelation, in that creation is fallen and subject to the curse whereas Scripture is infallible.

⁴⁶ Taken from "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics," Article XVII.

⁴⁷ Adapted from "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics," Article III.

⁴⁸ Adapted from "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics," Article XXI.

WE DENY that any genuine scientific fact, properly understood, is inconsistent with the true meaning of any passage of Scripture.⁴⁹ We further deny that man's reasoning, experiences, or observations ought to override the authorial intent of any passage of Scripture.⁵⁰

ARTICLE XXXI: REVELATION AND THEOLOGY

WE AFFIRM that true theology is inclusive not only of that which is expressly set forth in Scripture, but also of that which is derived from the legitimate implications of Scripture, the synthesis of the explicit propositions of Scripture, and the theological presuppositions of the biblical authors.

WE DENY that true theology can be derived from anything other than divine revelation. We deny that the priority of special revelation renders general revelation unable to reveal theological truth.⁵¹ We further deny the validity of regarding a plausible implication as a necessary implication.

ARTICLE XXXII: SCRIPTURE AND CHRISTIAN TRADITION

WE AFFIRM the Protestant principle of *sola Scriptura*, that Scripture alone is the ultimate, absolute, and infallible rule for faith and practice—the sole norming norm which is not normed.

WE DENY the mischaracterization of *sola Scriptura* that denies the existence of legitimate subordinate norms which are themselves normed by Scripture.

WE AFFIRM that all other forms of spiritual authority, including historic creeds, doctrinal confessions, local church pastors, teachers, and Bible commentators are subject to Scripture.

WE DENY that any creed, confession, pastor, teacher, or commentator is equal or superior to Scripture.

WE AFFIRM that, though Scripture is the supreme governor and final arbiter of Christian doctrine and duty, the creeds and confessions of church history can help protect believers from veering into heresy and false teaching.

WE DENY that such a use of creeds and confessions is at odds with the doctrine of *sola Scriptura*.

WE AFFIRM that, insofar as the ancient creeds (i.e., the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed, and the Chalcedonian Creed) accurately

⁴⁹ Adapted from "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics," Article XXI; Rom 1:18–19; 1 Cor 2:14–16.

⁵⁰ 2 Pet 1:16–21.

⁵¹ Ps 19:1–6; Rom 1:18–21.

represent biblical truth, they possess a derived authority that has historically defined the boundaries of Christian orthodoxy. We further affirm the ministerial use of church history: while subordinate to Scripture, it is valuable for faithfully guiding believers, particularly in the defense of sound doctrine.

WE DENY the magisterial use of tradition and reject any system that places tradition on a level of authority higher than or equal to the Word of God.⁵² We further deny the notion that church history is of no value for believers today.

ARTICLE XXXIII: THE CHECKING PRINCIPLE

WE AFFIRM that, while no era of church history is without fault, students of Scripture should consider whether or not their interpretation of the biblical text aligns with the conclusions of faithful believers throughout church history. The student of Scripture should be suspicious of espousing novel interpretations and exegetical conclusions that have never been espoused, or that have been espoused only by those who had departed from orthodoxy.

WE DENY that church tradition is inerrant or determinative of the meaning of Scripture. We further deny that teaching not found in a specific church tradition is automatically disqualified.

CONCERNING PASTORAL MINISTRY AND COUNSELING

ARTICLE XXXIV: THE SUFFICIENCY, IMPLICATIONS, AND APPLICATIONS OF SCRIPTURE

WE AFFIRM that, while there is a single meaning of any passage of Scripture, there will be many applications. While certain applications may vary in different contexts, some applications are binding on all generations. We further affirm that the authority and sufficiency of Scripture make it the supreme standard for faithfully carrying out all forms of gospel ministry and the principal means of the sanctification of the saints.

WE DENY that men ought ever to stand in judgment over Scripture. We deny that the distinction between universal and particular mandates of Scripture can be determined merely by cultural and situational factors. We further deny that universal mandates may ever be treated as culturally or situationally relative.⁵³ We further deny that secular-based models of psychology or sociology are adequate tools for pastoral counseling.

⁵² Cf. Mark 7:1–13.

⁵³ Adapted from “The Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics,” Article VIII.

CONCERNING EXPOSITION

ARTICLE XXXV: SCRIPTURE AND EXPOSITORY PREACHING

WE AFFIRM that expositional preaching is demanded by the nature of Scripture and is the culmination of the exegetical process, conveying God's intended message in its inspired and inerrant details, historical and literary context, theological depth and consistency, and intrinsic implications and applications.⁵⁴ We further affirm that the only type of preaching which sufficiently conveys the divine revelation and its proper application to life is that which faithfully expounds the text of Scripture as the Word of God.⁵⁵

WE DENY that the preacher has any message from God apart from the text of Scripture.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Neh 8:5–8; Acts 5:20; 20:27; 2 Tim 2:15; 4:1–2.

⁵⁵ Taken from "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics," Article XXV.

⁵⁶ Taken from "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics," Article XXV.