

# An Affirmation of Christian (and preterist) belief

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## God's sovereignty; the Scriptures; Creation

### ***We believe:***

*That God is sovereign and does whatever he pleases.*<sup>1</sup>

*Nothing happens apart from his will.*<sup>2</sup>

1. Ps 135:6; Dan 4:35.
2. Pr 16:33; 21:1; Mt 10:29; Isa 45:7; Lam 3:38; Gen 50:20; Ex 4:11; Job 1:21; 42:11; Ps 105:16; Jn 9:3; Ac 4:28.

*That God speaks to us through the Old and New Testament Scriptures.*<sup>3</sup>

*These alone are our rule for life and faith.*<sup>4</sup>

3. Lk 11:51; 24:44; Rom 3:2; 2Tim 3:15-16; 2Pet 1:20-21; 3:16; Mk 12:36; Ac 1:16; 28:25; Heb 3:7; 10:15.
4. 2Tim 3:16-17; Mk 7:9-13.

*That the natural world everywhere displays God's wisdom and power.*<sup>5</sup>

*Genesis is in full agreement with the established discoveries of modern science:*

*The universe came from nothing; Earth is a uniquely habitable planet, prepared for Man;*

*Life's origin and progression necessitated divine intervention (new life-forms arose abruptly);*

*Man is altogether unique — in his origin, his capabilities, and his role in the world.*<sup>6</sup>

5. Ps 19:1-6; Rom 1:20; Pr 8:27-31; Jer 10:12.
6. Genesis 1 – 2; Ps 8:3-8; 33:6, 9; 104:5ff.; Isa 45:18; Jer 10:12; Heb 11:3.

## Jesus' divinity and the Trinity

### ***We believe:***

*That Jesus Christ was truly God as well as man.*<sup>7</sup>

7. Lk 1:35; 8:24-25 (cf. Ps 107:29); Jn 1:1-3, 14, 18; 5:17-23; 8:24, 28, 58-59 (cf. Isa 43:10, 25; 45:18; 46:4; 51:12; Ex 3:14); 10:30-39; 12:41 (cf. Isa 6:1); 13:19; 17:5; 18:5-6; Mt 14:33; 28:9, 17; Lk 24:52; Jn 9:38; 20:28; Rom 9:5; 10:9-13; 1Cor 8:6; Php 2:6-11 (vss. 10-11, cf. Isa 45:23; Rom 14:11); Col 1:15-19; 2:9; Tit 2:13; Heb 1:3, 8-12; 2Pet 1:1; Rev 1:17 (cf. 1:8; 22:13); 5:13-14; 7:17; 22:3b.

*That God is a Trinity comprising three distinct Persons who are One: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*<sup>8</sup>

8. Mt 28:19; 1Cor 12:4-6; 2Cor 13:14; Eph 4:4-6; 1Pet 1:2; Mt 3:16-17; Lk 1:35; Rom 8:9-11; Jude 1:20-21; Mt 12:32; Ac 13:2; 21:11; Eph 4:30.

## Faith, human inability, and God's initiative in salvation

### **We believe:**

*That a Christian is any person who, mindful of his sin, looks for God's mercy in Christ.*<sup>9</sup>

*He believes the message of the gospel:*

*Concerning all that God has accomplished for us in Christ.*<sup>10</sup>

*Concerning the free offer and promise of salvation for all who turn to him in faith.*<sup>11</sup>

9. Jn 3:14-15; 1Tim 1:15-16.

10. Jn 20:31; Rom 10:8-9; 1Cor 1:23; 15:1-4; 2Cor 5:18-21; Gal 3:1-2.

11. Jn 3:16; Ac 2:38-41; Ro 1:17; 4:5, 23-24; 10:11-13; Gal 2:16; Psalm 130.

*That God's grace in the gospel is sincerely and freely offered to all.*<sup>12</sup>

*Yet without God's working, sinners are wholly unable and unwilling to come to Christ for salvation*

*— such is their bondage to sin and hostility toward him.*<sup>13</sup>

*But God sovereignly grants and imparts new birth, faith, and repentance to all whom he has chosen and predestined for eternal life.*<sup>14</sup>

12. Mt 11:28-30; Jn 3:15-16; 6:40; 1Tim 1:16; Rev 22:17; Isa 45:22; Eze 18:23, 30-32; Mk 1:15; Ac 17:30; 1Tim 2:4-6; 2Pet 3:9.

13. Gen 6:5; Jer 17:9; Mt 15:19; Jn 5:40; 6:44, 65; 8:34; Rom 3:10-18; 8:7; Eph 2:1-3; Col 1:21.

14. Mt 11:27; 16:16-17; Jn 3:5-7; 6:36-37, 10:15b, 26-29; 12:39-40; Ac 13:48; 16:14; Rom 8:30; 9:10-18; Gal 1:15; Eph 1:4-5; 2:8; 2Tim 1:9; 2:25; cf. Rev 17:8.

## Union with Christ; Baptism and the Lord's Supper

### **We believe:**

*That salvation and all other spiritual blessings come to us only as we are "in Christ" — joined to, and identified with him.*<sup>15</sup>

*Jesus died on the cross as our Substitute; our sins were transferred to him; he bore the punishment that we deserved.*<sup>16</sup>

*Additionally, his perfect obedience is credited to us, so that God can fully accept us.*<sup>17</sup>

*No matter how bad one's past has been, all who turn to him in faith are fully justified — acquitted and declared righteous.*<sup>18</sup>

15. Eph 1:3-7, 11, 13.

16. Isa 53:5-6, 8, 10, 12; Rom 3:25; 2Cor 5:21a; 1Jn 2:2; 4:10; cf. Lev 1:4; 16:21.

17. Rom 5:17-19; 10:3-4; 2Cor 5:21b; Php 3:9.

18. Lk 18:13-14; Rom 4:5-8, 23-24; 1Tim 1:13-16; Isa 55:6-7.

*That Baptism and the Lord's Supper depict the spiritual blessings that derive from union with Christ.*

*As aids to faith, they are intended for those only who repent and look to Christ for their salvation.*<sup>19</sup>

19. Mk 1:4-5; 16:16; Ac 2:41; 8:12, 37; 10:47; 18:8; 22:16; Gal 3:26-29; Col 2:12; 1Pet 3:21; 1Cor 11:27-29.

## The New Covenant and God's law; the Sabbath

### **We believe:**

*That the Old (Mosaic) Covenant, finding fulfillment in the person and work of Christ, has been terminated and superseded by the New Covenant in his blood.<sup>20</sup>*

*Nevertheless, God's unchanging moral law remains the standard of holiness for Christians under the New Covenant.<sup>21</sup>*

20. Mt 5:17; Col 2:16-17; Heb 10:1; Rom 7:1-4; 1Co 9:20; Gal 3:19, 23-25; Eph 2:15; Heb 8:13.

21. Mt 5:17-48; 22:37-40; Lk 10:25-28; 18:18-20; Rom 7:7-25; 13:8-10; 1Cor 9:21; Gal 5:14; Eph 6:1-3; Heb 8:10; Ps 119:97.

*That the 4th (Sabbath) commandment is fulfilled in the spiritual rest Christ gives to his people as they cease from their own works and trust in him alone for salvation.<sup>22</sup>*

22. Mt 11:28-29; Heb 4:9-11; Col 2:16-17; Rom 14:5.

## Men and women

### **We believe:**

*That God has assigned different roles to men and women.<sup>23</sup>*

*Within the family, the husband (and father) is to exercise loving leadership, reflecting the headship of Christ over his Church.<sup>24</sup>*

*And in each local church, suitable men ("elders") are to lead and teach the congregation.<sup>25</sup>*

23. Gen 1:27; 2:18; 3:16-19.

24. Eph 5:22-25; Col 3:18-19; 1Pet 3:1-7; Eph 6:4; 1Tim 3:4, 12; Gen 18:19.

25. Ac 14:23; 15:22; 20:17; 1Tim 3:1-7 (cf. 1Tim 2:11-15); 4:11-14; 5:17; Tit 1:5-9; 1Pet 5:1-3.

## Miracles and supernatural revelation

### **We believe:**

*That the miracles, visions, and supernatural gifts present in the apostolic Church have served their foundational role and have largely (or entirely) ceased.<sup>26</sup>*

26. Ac 2:4-11, 43; 3:6-10; 5:12; 6:8; 8:6-7; 10:46; 14:3; 19:6, 11-12; 1Cor 12:28; 2Cor 12:1, 12; Gal 3:5; Heb 2:3-4; 1Cor 13:8-12; 14:21-22.

## Israel and the throne of David

### **We believe:**

*That Jesus was the one true and faithful Israelite.<sup>27</sup>*

*Through union with him, Christians also are Abraham's children and heirs of the gracious promises God made to him.<sup>28</sup>*

27. Mt 2:15 (cf. Hos 11:1); 4:1-10 (cf. Dt 8:2-3); Jn 1:47, 51 (cf. Gen 28:12); 15:1 (cf. Ps 80:8; Jer 2:21); Gal 3:16.

28. Gen 12:2-3; 17:7; 22:17-18; Rom 2:28-29; 4:11-17; 15:8-12; Gal 3:6-9, 29; 4:28; 6:15-16; Eph 3:6; Php 3:3.

*That when Jesus ascended into heaven, the Throne of David was fully restored.*<sup>29</sup>

*Furthermore, Old Testament prophecies concerning Israel's restoration are fulfilled, not in the modern state of Israel, but in the gospel gathering of God's elect people — Gentiles as well as Jews — into the Christian Church.*<sup>30</sup>

29. Lk 1:32-33; Ac 2:29-36; Heb 1:3-13; Rev 1:5, 11:15; 12:5; cf. 2Sam 7:11-16; Psalms 2, 72, 110; Isa 9:6-7; 11:1-10; Jer 23:5-6; 30:9; 33:15; Eze 34:23-24; 37:24-25; Dan 7:13-14.

30. Ac 1:6; 3:24; 15:14-19 (cf. Am 9:11-12); Rom 9:24-26 and 1Pet 2:10 (cf. Hos 1:10; 2:23); Gal 4:26-27 (cf. Isa 54:1); Rev 21:2, 9-10 (cf. Eph 5:25-32); 21:23-26 (cf. Isa 60:3, 11, 19).

## Jesus' return; the coming of God's kingdom

### **We believe:**

*That the New Testament everywhere anticipates a first-century return of Christ.*<sup>31</sup>

*Jesus returned the same way he entered heaven — in the Shekinah, the Cloud of God's presence and glory.*<sup>32</sup>

*He returned as the "Son of Man" who (in his ascension) had been granted all authority.*<sup>33</sup>

*He returned in his Father's glory, as the divine Judge.*<sup>34</sup>

*That Jesus now reigned from heaven was "seen" in the public judgment of his enemies — Nero and the Jews — in 68-70 AD.*<sup>35</sup>

*At that time also, the dead in Hades were resurrected and judged.*<sup>36</sup>

31. Mt 16:27-28; 24:34; Mk 8:38 – 9:1; Lk 21:31-32; Jn 21:22; 1Cor 1:7; Php 1:6; 4:5; 1Thes 4:15; 1Tim 6:14; Heb 10:25, 37; Jas 5:7-9; 1Pet 4:5, 7, 17; 1Jn 2:18, 28; Rev 1:1, 3, 7; 2:25; 3:11; 22:6-7, 10, 12, 20.

32. Lk 21:27; Ac 1:9-11.

33. Dan 7:13-14; Ps 2:6-9; 110:1-2.

34. Mt 16:27-28; 24:30; 26:64-65; 2Pet 1:16-18; Rev 1:7; Isa 19:1.

35. Mt 24:30; 26:64; 2Thes 2:8; Rev 1:7; 11:8; 13:18; Psalm 110.

36. 1Pet 4:5; Rev 1:18; 11:18; 20:11-15.

*That all nations belong to Jesus as his reward and inheritance.*<sup>37</sup>

*He will, in time, win all nations to himself through the gospel proclamation.*<sup>38</sup>

*His kingdom advances as people willingly submit to his rule through the gospel.*<sup>39</sup>

37. Ps 2:8; Mt 28:18.

38. Mt 28:18-20; Rom 4:13; Gal 3:8; Gen 12:3; 22:18; Ps 22:27-28; 72:8-11, 17; 86:9; Isa 2:2-4; 11:9; Dan 7:13-14; Rev 15:4; 21:24; 22:2.

39. Mt 6:10; Mk 1:15; Lk 17:20-21 (KJV); Jn 3:3, 5; Ac 15:14-19; 28:23, 31; Rom 14:17; Col 1:13; Ps 2:12.

*That rulers and governments everywhere ought to publicly acknowledge Jesus as Lord and govern in accordance with biblical principles.*<sup>40</sup>

40. Php 2:9-11; Rev 1:5; Ps 2:10-12; 47:8-9; 82:1-8; Isa 49:7; 52:15; Dan 4:1-3; 6:26-27; 7:27 (NET, NIV); Rev 21:24.

## Our posthumous destiny; Christ's eternal rule

### ***We believe:***

*That for God's people, death has been effectively "abolished" (2 Timothy 1:10).<sup>41</sup>*

*Eternal life is our present possession.<sup>42</sup>*

*Indeed, with the Resurrection now past,<sup>43</sup> Christians when they die are immediately clothed with their new spiritual bodies and enter heaven to dwell with Christ forever.<sup>44</sup>*

41. 2Tim 1:10; Jn 6:50; 8:51; 11:26.

42. Jn 3:36; 5:24; 6:47, 54; 1Jn 5:13.

43. Rev 1:18; 20:11-15; 22:6, 10.

44. 1Cor 15:44-50; 2Cor 5:1-10; 1Thes 4:17; Php 1:23; Heb 11:39-40.

*That Jesus must remain a king-priest "forever" (Psalm 110:4), because the world itself will continue on for a very, very long time.<sup>45</sup>*

*His reign will continue, to all intents, forever.<sup>46</sup>*

*Sinners (on earth) will always need a priestly mediator to intercede for them.<sup>47</sup>*

45. Ps 110:1-4; Heb 6:20; 7:17, 21, 24.

46. 2Sam 7:16; Ps 72:5; Isa 9:7; Dan 7:14; Lk 1:33; Rev 11:15.

47. Heb 7:25; Rom 8:34; 1Jn 2:1.