

THE PITTSBURGH PROJECT

DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

I. GOD

We believe in one God who is creator, living, holy, sovereign, eternal, powerful, provident, merciful, loving and just. The mystery of God's person and character is too wonderful and incomprehensible for the human mind. There is no other God beside Him.

We believe this one God is also a co-eternal Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit; equal in being, substance, will and intellect.

We believe in Jesus Christ, God incarnate, who is human, as we are, and sinless, as only God is. This Jesus, the God-Man, who became human through the act of the Holy Spirit and not through human achievement, lived among us, taught us, revealed to us the person of God, died a shameful death on the cross by human hands but according to the will of God, rose victoriously from the grave, was seen by many witnesses, ascended to heaven and is returning again to establish His rightful kingdom once and for all. Jesus is God's final Word to all creation who will one day bow at the feet of Jesus and confess Him as true Lord.

We believe in the Holy Spirit as eternal God active in the world today. The Spirit convicts, teaches, comforts, guides, indwells and empowers believers for Christian ministry. The Spirit also works in unbelievers, drawing them towards a saving and vital relationship with Jesus Christ.

II. THE BIBLE

We believe in the Bible as God's inspired word to humanity. Contained in it is infallible information pertaining to the salvation of persons by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. In it we read about God's nature, will and dealings with His people. All of Scripture, Old and New Testaments, sings of the glory of God and His ultimate concern for the world. All of Scripture also points to Jesus Christ as the only true Son of God, Lord and Savior. This Bible is the final authority in the life of the church and of believers. It exceeds the authority of the church, the intellect and human experience.

III. THE CHURCH

We believe in one church, holy and universal. This church includes all the redeemed in all of history who, by grace, have been forgiven and adopted as children of the living God. This includes Abraham and Sarah, Moses and Miriam, Isaiah, Ruth, Hosea and Gomer, Mary and Joseph, Paul, Lois, Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Suzanna and Christians today and those still to come. This church exists first to enjoy and worship God, and then to proclaim, through word, sacrament and life, the truth, love, mercy, grace, justice and joy of God to the rest of the world. The church is called to be active in the world as an agent of redemption, serving as a preserver of goodness and truth as well as expositor of sin and lies.

IV. HUMANITY

We believe in the created goodness of humanity. In the image of God they were created male and female and then pronounced "good." They were given prominence over the rest of creation and were declared "a little lower than the angels." They were created with the capacity to sin and the ability to choose. Humans chose the way of sin and have, therefore, been tarnished with its reality since the beginning. This choice caused a chasm to exist between a sinful humanity and a holy God. This choice also disrupted the relationships of persons with one another and with the rest of creation. The consequence of this decision is experienced through death, separation, hatred, destruction and pain. No human effort has been able, nor will it ever be able, to bridge this great and wide gulf. God never abandons His creation. God continues to pursue after His lost loved ones.

V. JUSTIFICATION

We believe in justification by faith alone, and this faith is in Jesus Christ. God, by grace, offered the solution to the human dilemma. This was through the incarnation, atonement and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Because Jesus was both God and human, He was able to offer Himself as a pure and blameless sacrifice for the sin of the world. Because Jesus rose from the dead, human kind can have hope for and believe in their resurrection and life eternal. This justification is freely offered to all persons who continue to have the capacity to sin and the ability to choose.

VI. SANCTIFICATION

We believe that while they are justified, Christians are by no means perfected. Christians are called to live a holy life as God is holy. However, the reality of sin persists. Nonetheless, the process of perfection - sanctification - is in motion. Through the work of the Holy Spirit and the cooperation of human will, Christians are being conformed to the image of Christ. A moral, loving and responsible life is the call after which Christians strive.

VII. THE MISSION

We believe that while Christians cannot contribute anything to their justification, they are called to a life of service in the world. Personally and as a church, Christians are committed to serving the needs of the poor, elderly, widowed, sick and oppressed. They are also compelled to proclaim the good news of reconciliation through Jesus Christ to the unevangelized world. Witness through proclamation of the word, acts of mercy and works of justice are the mission of the Christian and of the Church.