

## **Theological Conviction Statement**

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### **Part One: Theological Views**

Please state briefly your personal views on the following subjects:

#### 1. The Inspiration and Canonicity of Scripture

I believe that “all Scripture is God breathed and useful for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness” (2 Tim. 3:16) and that they are the rule of faith and life. Men of God were inspired and carried along by the Holy Spirit to write the Scriptures. I believe that the canon is closed and that God has fully spoken to us by his Son (Heb. 1).

#### 2. The Doctrine of the Trinity

I believe in the doctrine of the Trinity; one God in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I believe in the ontological equality between the three persons of the Godhead as they share in the same substance (homoousios). I believe they differ in their roles and yet none is ever without or apart from the others.

#### 3. The Second Coming of Jesus Christ

I believe that Jesus will come to the earth for a second time visibly, bodily, in power and in glory at the end of the world to save the elect and to judge the ungodly.

#### 4. The Continuation of the Sign Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Sign gifts were in operation during the foundational stage of the church to authenticate the message of Christ and the apostles and were unique to that time period. Now, the canon is closed and the revelatory nature of them has ceased (Heb. 1:1-3; Rev. 22). At the same time, I believe that God can do whatever he pleases and sometimes does miraculous things that are hard to explain.

#### 5. The Five Points of Calvinism (with attention to the extent of the atonement)

Total Depravity- Every part of man has been affected by the fall and left to himself he is unable to respond to God. The heart is wicked, man does not seek God, and no one is righteous.

Unconditional election- God has chosen a people for his own glory. His choice is based on his own grace and mercy, and nothing in the individual. “He saved us not by works done by us in righteousness, but because of his own mercy” (Titus 3). He did not look into the future and choose based on human decision, but he foreknew the elect and predestined them in eternity past according to his own will for his own glory.

Limited atonement- Jesus died only for the church—his elect. He did not shed his blood and make atonement for the reprobate. Though his death was sufficient for all, it is not efficacious for all. He died for the many, the elect, not all.

Irresistible Grace- God will have his people and when he calls them by the Holy Spirit, they cannot resist his grace. He draws (drags!) the elect unto himself. By the Holy Spirit he then opens their eyes to see the Kingdom of God by regenerating them (Jn. 3:3). One cannot come to Jesus unless the Father draws them (Jn. 6:65), but when he does draw them, they cannot resist.

Perseverance of the Saints- Salvation cannot be lost by the elect. Those who are truly saved by the grace of God cannot fall away from the state of grace in which they stand. Not death, hell, Satan, or an individual himself can pluck the elect from the hand of God (thank God). For the elect will persevere, through trial and tribulation, unto eternal life by the grace of God. Their salvation is sure; they are seated with Christ in the heavenly places and their life is hidden with God!

#### 6. The Doctrine of the Church (including the proper recipients of the sacraments)

The true church is the invisible body made up by the elect, chosen by God. This is the body of Christ. Within the visible church (made up of believers and unbelievers) the invisible church exists and is seen only by God. The church exists to proclaim the word of God, administer the sacraments, engage in public worship, and to execute discipline when necessary. It exists for the gathering and edification of the body of Christ. As for the proper recipients of the sacraments, the Lord's Supper is to only be taken by born again Christians. Baptism, on the other hand, is a sign and seal of the covenant of grace to believers and also to their children who are visibly included in the covenant and heirs of the promises of God, which are fully realized in their hearts when they profess faith in Christ.

#### 7. The Role of Women in the Church (including the issue of their ordination to church office)

Women have been made in the image of God, are equal with men, blessed with spiritual gifts, and are able to edify the church in many ways. Based on the Scriptures (1 Tim. 3; Titus 1) I do not believe in the ordination of women to church office. I do not believe women are to teach men but are able to teach other women and children.

#### 8. The Doctrine of Creation (including the view of the days Genesis one)

God, by his power and for his own praise and glory, made all things out of nothing (ex nihilo) in six days, and it was good. All things find their source in Him—he gives life and breath to every living thing. He opens his hand and satisfies the desires of every living thing. He makes the sun to rise on the just and the unjust. All creation is dependent upon him. He made the world and all creatures. He made man in his own image to glorify him and enjoy him forever.

## Part Two: Exceptions to the Standards

*Please list any and all exceptions you take to the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Westminster Shorter and Larger Catechisms. When possible, format your statement as follows:*

**I have no exceptions to the standards.**

Section of the Confession or Catechism Number	Language to which you take exception	Explanation
WSC Question 60  WLC 117	“even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days”	The Sabbath is to be a delight, not a burden or restriction. I believe this language in the catechism is restrictive. Jesus said, “the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath” (Mk. 2:27). The Sabbath is given as a gift from God for rest, reflection, and renewal. Many Christians find this joy and rest in community with their family and Christian friends. This takes the form of breaking bread with one another and engaging in recreational activities. When the Sabbath becomes a constraint it loses its purpose. The restrictions seem to contradict the very freedom that has been bought for believers in Christ. The Sabbath is a time to rest in the gifts that God has given, to joyfully reflect on spiritual truths, to foretaste heaven’s joys being immersed in Christian community, and to enjoy the freedom one has in Christ. It is not the lack or absence of activity that makes the Sabbath fruitful, but finding joy, rest, and renewal in God which comes in various ways. Our true, eternal Sabbath rest is found in Christ and has been sealed in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. The Christian is now free to celebrate the Sabbath, finding rest in the truth of salvation and joyfully being in community with others.