

A Statement of Faith for the Twenty-First Century Church

Below is a series of statements in which I believe are pertinent to the belief system, function and body life of the Church as described in Scripture.

The Centrality of the Church

I believe the purpose of the Church is to glorify God by building itself up in faith, by instruction of the Word, by fellowship, by keeping the ordinances, and by the proclamation of the Gospel to all nations and cultures.¹

I believe the one authority of the Church is Christ Jesus, who is building His Church, and nothing will prevail against, not even Satan.²

I believe the Christ's strategy for building His Church is clearly outlined in Acts as churches are planted and established in which believers are committed to spiritual maturation and participants in the Great Commission.³

I believe that the Church is the "pillar and buttress of truth"⁴, a truth which has been delivered from the Apostles' teaching and is a deposit of faith to be preserved in all churches.⁵

The Kerygma – The Core Truths of the Gospel Proclaimed

I believe that the gospel of Christ, proclaimed by the Apostles is as follows⁶:

1. JESUS CHRIST, the image of the invisible God and firstborn of all creation is the gospel promised before hand through prophets of the Scriptures and fulfilled according to the Scriptures;
2. JESUS CHRIST is a descendant of David and declared the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness;
3. JESUS CHRIST died, buried, resurrected on the third day according to the Scriptures, and appear before witnesses;
4. JESUS CHRIST is now seated at the right hand in the heavenly places above all every name and earthly powers, not only in this age but the age to come;

¹ Ephesians 3:21; 4:12-16; 2 Timothy 2:2, 15; 3:16-17; Acts 2:47; Acts 2:3; 8:42;

² 1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:8; Matthew 16:13-20

³ Matthew 28: 19-20; Acts 13, 14; 20: 28-32; 1 Timothy 3:14-16; Titus 1:5-9

⁴ 1 Timothy 3:15 – ESV

⁵ 1 Timothy 3:14-16; 2 Timothy 1:13-14; 3:10-11; 2 Peter 3:1-2; Jude 3, 17

⁶ Drawn from Galatians 1:1-5; 1 Corinthians 15: 1-11; Romans 1:1-7; Ephesians 1:1-23; Colossians 1:5-23; 1 Timothy 3:14-16

5. JESUS CHRIST was delivered up for our sins and raised for our justification which was the will of God;
6. In JESUS CHRIST, He chose us before the foundation of the world, that we would be blameless and holy;
7. In JESUS CHRIST, we have redemption through His blood and forgiveness for our sins according to the richness of His grace;
8. In JESUS CHRIST, we obtained an inheritance, sealed with the promise and guarantee of the Holy Spirit; and,
9. JESUS CHRIST will one day return again as Savior and Judge of men, when He will deliver up the kingdom to God the Father, having abolished all rule and authority.

I believe that through this one and only gospel of Christ, salvation is of the grace of God on the basis of redemption of Christ and the merit of His shed blood (not on the basis human merit or works). Each individual who places his/her faith in this gospel is a permanent child of God and a member of His Church.⁷

I believe that all who have accepted and responded to the gospel message of Christ need to be baptized, signifying their identity with Christ, and then function as a member as member of the body of Christ within the local church.⁸

I believe that each believer should partake of the Lord's Table with fellow believers in a manner that identifies himself with Christ, as one whose sins are forgiven and in a covenant relationship with Christ, and in a manner that identifies himself with Christ's body, the Church, as one who is in fellowship with the church.⁹

The Didache – The Core Biblical Teaching

I believe that God revealed through the Apostles His desires for the churches in the New Testament to follow the following instructions:

1. Believers are to lay aside his old sinful life and renew his mind in the teaching and conform his new life to the will of God¹⁰;
2. Certain attributes available through God's Word are to be characterized in each believer¹¹;
3. Individual households must be properly placed in order according to the teaching of the Scripture¹²;

⁷ Ephesians 1:1-14; 2:1-10; 2 Corinthians 5: 14-17; Romans 5, 8; 1 Peter 1:18-19

⁸ Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 10:44-48; Romans 6:1-11; 1 Corinthians 12: 1-31

⁹ 1 Corinthians 11:17-34

¹⁰ Ephesians 4:22-24; Romans 12:1, 2

¹¹ Galatians 5: 22, 23; Colossians 3:12; 2 Peter 1:1-11

¹² Ephesians 5:22-6:9; Colossians 3:18-4:1; 1 Peter 3:1-7

4. God’s household must be properly ordered as according to the sound doctrine received from the Apostles as to the relationship between fellow believers¹³ as well as the form and function within the leadership of the Church¹⁴;
5. Each believer must be committed to “one-another” relationship between believers and the use of his gifts, in the building up of the Church¹⁵;
6. A pattern of attitudes toward church relationships must be observed in which each is to pursue unity in the bond of peace¹⁶; and,
7. Each believer is to lead a responsible and temperate life – working hard, providing for their own, making the most of time, and keeping alert for Satan and his schemes in their lives¹⁷

In conclusion, all matters concerning the life and beliefs of the church are to be settled by the Word of God. Though elders, who are gifted men as pastors and teachers, are appointed to guard and protect the local church, all are subject to the authority of God’s Word¹⁸.

¹³ 1 Timothy 3:14-16; Titus 2; 2 Thessalonians 2:15; 3:16; Colossians 1: 21-29

¹⁴ Acts 6: 1-7; 20:28-30; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-16; 1 Peter 5: 1 Peter 5:1-11

¹⁵ Romans 12: 3-16; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6

¹⁶ Romans 12:9-15, 14:1-7; Philippians 1:27-2:4; Ephesians 4:1-6

¹⁷ Ephesians 5:1-22; 6:10-18; 1 Thessalonians 4:9-12; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; 1 Peter 5:6-11

¹⁸ 1 Timothy 4:1-6, 6:3-5:2; 2 Timothy 2:14-15, 3:16,4:1-4; Titus 1:5-16, 2:1,15; 2 Peter 3:14-18; Jude 3,17