

## **MY CREED**

What I believe about God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit and God's Word, the Scriptures given to humanity to learn to live, love and lead.

by

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## ARTICLE I GOD

- Affirmation 1.1* I believe in the One and true God, Yahweh, who was and is and always will be.
- *“In the beginning God...”* (Gen. 1:1)
  - *“There is no one like Yahweh our God”* (Ex. 8:10)
  - *“Yahweh, He is God in heaven above and earth below; there is no other”* (Deut. 4:39)
  - *“Hear, O Israel! Yahweh is our God, Yahweh is one!”* (Deut. 6:4)
  - *“There is one body and one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.”* (Eph. 4:4-6)
  - *“I am the Alpha and the Omega, says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”* (Rev. 1:8)
- Affirmation 1.2* I believe the only way humanity can know who God is would be to describe him through human characteristics. As finite beings, we cannot know God fully, but as his children we may ask for understanding and he will graciously reveal his character to us. He is as Isaiah describes (yet not limited to these descriptions), *“Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.”* (Isa. 9:6) I believe in the attributes of God are included in Isaiah 9 yet hesitate to overlook those which may not be recognized by this short verse.
- *“But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.”* (James 1:5)
  - *“...the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him.”* (Eph. 1:17)
  - *“Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the Lord.”* (Jer. 9:23-24)
- Affirmation 1.3* I affirm God is wonderfully good. God is good not by any standard of good, He is good because He is the source of goodness; He is the rule or measure of good.
- *“The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation.”* (Ex. 34:6-7)
  - *“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.”* (James 1:17)
- Affirmation 1.4* I affirm God is love, grace and mercy. True love embodies God, meaning He is the Genesis—the beginning of love. He is its source. He pours out His love upon creation. Despite their flawed state, He loves His people.
- *“But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.”* (Eph. 4:7)

- *“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”* (Heb. 4:16)
- *“He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God abides in him, and who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.”* (1 John 4:8, 16)
- *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a loving hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.”* (1 Pet. 1:3)

*Affirmation 1.5* I affirm God is sovereign, mighty and immanent. Sovereignty tells of God's divine control over everything that happens. There is nothing outside the control of His loving hand.

- *“But our God is in heaven; He does what He pleases.”* (Psa. 115:3)
- *“Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will.”* (Matt 10:29)
- *“I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion.”* (Rom. 9:15)

*Affirmation 1.6* I affirm God is transcendent, immutable, and holy. God is other, He is unlike any other being in our experience and so no analogy or comparison can come close to perfectly describing Him. God never changes. Holiness sets God apart from fallen humanity— total purity, incorruptible, and separate.

- *“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.”* (Isa. 55:8-9)
- *“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!”* (Isa. 6:3)
- *“For I am the Lord, I do not change.”* (Mal. 3:6)

*Affirmation 1.7* I affirm God is eternal; omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient. God is all-powerful, all-knowing, all-present from the beginning and to the end of time. There is nothing He does not know, there is no place He cannot be found, and He has the power to accomplish what He wants to accomplish.

- *“I Am who I Am”* (Gen 3:14)
- *“But You, O Lord, shall endure forever, and the remembrance of Your name to all generations.”* (Psa. 102:12)
- *“With God all things are possible”* (Matt. 19:26)
- *“I will also walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people.”* (Lev. 26:12; Ex. 29:45; 2 Cor. 6:16)
- *“God’s understanding is infinite.”* (Psa. 147:5)
- *“Known to God from all eternity are all His works.”* (Acts 15:18)

*Affirmation 1.8* I affirm God is peace, righteous, and just. God is the ultimate judge over the lives and actions of humanity, but it is in His patience and righteousness that He is a just God.

- *“The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.”* (Psa. 19:7-9)
- *“The Lord is righteous in all His ways, gracious in all His works.”* (Psa. 145:17)

*Affirmation 1.9* I affirm God is ruler of all in heaven, on earth and under the earth. The majesty of God— His greatness and splendor is revealed in his creation and mighty works of deliverance. On account of His majesty, God is worthy of praise and adoration.

- *“The Lord reigns, He is clothed with majesty; the Lord has clothed and girded Himself with strength; indeed, the world is firmly established, it will not be moved.”* (Psa. 93:1)
- *“And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.”* (Heb. 1:3-4)

## ARTICLE II THE TRINITY

I believe in the Trinitarian Godhead: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I believe in God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three persons, one essence. I believe that there was never a time that the Trinitarian God did not exist. Ultimately, I believe that these three persons of one essence are all equal in their unity and we should not apply an order of hierarchy. And I believe that each Person of the Godhead has a specific role and works by intermingling with one another— a relationship, a unity.

Although the Scripture never spells out the term trinity explicitly, it is apparent in many places. Key verses include Genesis 1:1-2 and John 1:1-2. Both represent the Godhead existing before creation. In addition, Jesus’ baptism and transfiguration illustrates the Trinity.

- *“Then God said, “Let **us** make man in **our** image, after **our** likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”* (Gen. 1:26)

*Affirmation 2.1* I believe in God the Father, the Person of the Godhead who orchestrates His promised plan for humanity, the world and the universe. God existed before the creation of the world, before He put time into motion— the I Am (and the I will be what I will be). God is the active agent in human affairs. The One who is active in history in its past, present and future.

- *“And call no man your father on earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven.”* (Matt. 23:9)
- *“Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us? Why then are we faithless to one another, profaning the covenant of our fathers?”* (Mal. 2:10)
- *“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.”* (Jer. 29:11)

- *“The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps.”* (Prov. 16:9)

*Affirmation 2.2* I believe in God the Son, Jesus the Messiah (Christ), who is the incarnation of the invisible God. The One sent by the Father to restore humanity to God Himself. I believe Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God born of a virgin called Mary, Suffered at the hands humanity, died on a cross for the sins of the whole world and rose again defeating sin, death and lives victoriously at the right hand of the Father until such a time that He is given the order to come back to judge all nations and bring His bride, the Church to a new home, a new earth, a new Jerusalem.

- *“Behold, a voice out of the heavens said, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.”* (Matt. 3:17; Mark 1:11)
- *“And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.”* (John 1:14)
- *“Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call his name Immanuel.”* (Isa. 7:14)
- *“For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on his shoulders...”* (Isa. 9:6a)

*Affirmation 2.3* I believe in God the Holy Spirit, sent from both the Father and the Son, who is just like the Son— another helper— who is the One that motivates believers to remember the life, death and resurrection of the Son. The Spirit is the personhood of God who is the source of life— creating and sustaining (re-creating)— the physical life and the divine life that overflows throughout creation. The Holy Spirit exhibits power to effect things only God can do. The activity of the Spirit is the activity of God. Within humanity, the Spirit regenerates— spiritual rebirth— those who receive Him and are made alive to spiritual things. Being made alive means being in-filled with the Spirit who gives spiritual gifts to all to be used in building up the body.

- *“I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever... He will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have told you”* (John 14:16, 26)
- *“When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me”* (John 15:26)
- *“When He comes, He will convict the world about sin, righteousness, and judgment”* (John 16:8)

### ARTICLE III **WORKS OF GOD**

God has a plan for humanity and orchestrates it through history. God guides history to His ultimate goal of recreation— a new heaven and a new earth where those who believe in His plan of redemption, Christ crucified and raised, will live eternally within the presence of God. However, before there is recreation, God creatively acts in creation and continues to act through His providential plan.

- *“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, new*

*Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.'"* (Rev. 21:1-4)

- Affirmation 3.1* I believe in God as originator, designer, maker of heaven and earth. God created all things. He spoke them into being. The greatness and wonderful goodness of God is illustrated in His creation of the universe and all that is within it. God's first act of all of history is to bring us into existence, to create all things for His glory. Creation was God's doing rather than a mere chance happening.
- *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters. Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light. God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day."* (Gen. 1:1-5)
  - *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it."* (John 1:1-5)
- Affirmation 3.2* I believe in the providence of God— He continues to work in and through all He has created. "The government will be upon His shoulders," testifies that God is actively engaged in achieving His purposes in His creation and that nothing can deter those purposes. God preserves His creation and is working toward recreation and restoration through protection and provision. Although humanity has free will to choose life or death, to obey God or not, God's plans will never fail. He is in control of all that occurs.
- *"For I know that the Lord is great and that our Lord is above all gods. Whatever the Lord pleases, He does, in heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all deeps. He causes the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth; who makes lightnings for the rain, who brings forth the wind from His treasuries."* (Psa. 135:5-7; ref. Matt. 5:45)
  - *"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose."* (Rom. 8:28)
  - *"Know therefore that the Lord your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations"* (Deut. 7:9)
  - *"For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things To Him be the glory forever. Amen."* (Rom. 11:36)

- Affirmation 3.3* I believe in that evil exists in the form of a person (Satan/Adversary), by other demonic spirits, and in acts by humanity. This shadow is cast across God’s ‘good’ creation and to understand its beginnings and where it came from is a difficult task. Yet, the Bible traces the entrance of suffering and evil into the world to a grand but terrible quality of human beings— self-freedom, an enslavement of creation. When God looks upon evil, He may twist it for the good of His people or use it to humble their hearts.
- *“You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” (Gen. 2:15)*
  - *“As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive.” (Gen. 15:20)*
  - *“The Lord has made everything for its own purpose, Even the wicked for the day of evil.” (Prov. 16:4)*
  - *“For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders.” (Matt.15:19)*

#### ARTICLE IV **SCRIPTURE**

The voice of God speaks in regards to the past, present and future. It is a function of the Holy Spirit to use Scripture as a vehicle orienting humanity to the voice of God. Those who have ears let him hear what the Spirit is saying and God is revealing about His plan of redemption and recreation. The Holy Spirit brings to life the text— God’s speech acts— and prompts the spirit of believers to act as the hands and feet of Christ— His actual representation throughout the earth to form a unified body.

- *“When you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and when you believed in Him, you were also sealed with the promised Holy Spirit. He is the down payment of our inheritance, for the redemption of the possession, to the praise of His glory.” (Eph. 1:13-14)*
- *“And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.” (Isa. 11:2)*

- Affirmation 4.1* I believe that God chose to reveal Himself through His voice recorded in Scripture. The revelation of Scripture is not about things or ideas, but it is a self-revelation or self-disclosure of God Himself to humanity. The relationship of the “Word become flesh” (incarnation) and the written word of God become linked through the concept of revelation.
- *“God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.” (Heb. 1:1-2)*
  - *“These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” (Luke 24:44)*

- *“Remember the former things long past, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things which have not been done, saying, ‘My purpose will be established, and I will accomplish all My good pleasure.’” (Isa. 46:9-10)*

*Affirmation 4.2* I believe that Scripture is the inspired Word of God. I believe God authored and breathed His life into the Scriptures. Inspiration is not dictation. Nor is it trance-like writing. God moved through the human writer to ensure the integrity and accuracy of His word would stand true.

- *“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.” (2 Tim. 3:16-17)*
- *“Every word of God is flawless; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.” (Prov. 30:5)*
- *“For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.” (Heb. 4:12)*

*Affirmation 4.3* I believe the Holy Spirit illuminates the Scripture for humanity to understand and know the will and ways of God. The Spirit seeks to illuminate the mind of humanity through the recognition of sin. Through the spiritual discipline of study, God gives direction and understanding to the issues of life. He illuminates our path.

- *“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” (Psa. 119:105)*
- *“The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.” (Psa. 119:130)*
- *“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. ‘He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you.’ All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you.” (John 16:13-16)*

*Affirmation 4.4* I believe that the Scriptures are the authoritative words of God that lead to life abundant. Scripture is not filled with a list of rules and regulations but is God speaking to humanity about Himself and a relationship He longs to have with each of His created beings. However what authority means for Scripture is that it is truthful and trustworthy in the things God has planned for the community of God.

- *“For the word of the Lord is right and true; he is faithful in all he does.” (Psa. 33:4)*
- *“O Lord GOD, you are that God, and your words be true, and you have promised this goodness to your servant” (2 Sam. 7:28)*
- *“The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.” (Psa. 19:7)*
- *“It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all.” (1 Tim. 1:15)*

- *“And He who sits on the throne said, ‘Behold, I am making all things new’ And He said, ‘Write, for these words are faithful and true.’” (Rev.21:5)*

*Affirmation 4.5* I believe in the inerrancy of Scripture. The term inerrancy is a delicate term to concretely attribute to these writings. I would define inerrancy much more in line with infallibility. The concept of these writings as being “not liable to deceive” is a more accurate translation. The Scriptures make no false or misleading statements about God, faith, practice, and salvation.

- *“This truth gives them confidence that they have eternal life, which God--who does not lie--promised them before the world began.” (Titus 1:2)*
- *“God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?” (Num. 23:19)*
- *“Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David.” (Psa. 89:35)*
- *“God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope set before us may be greatly encouraged.” (Heb. 6:18)*