

Declaration  
Of  
FAITH

"Here I stand,  
I can do no other!"

The unity of the Church, the people of God, is found in no human organization, but in Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, the one and only true Head of the Church (*Ephesians 1:3-13, 19-22*). The unity of the Church is accomplished IN Christ. The true Church, made up of all who have been chosen by God, have all and each received the Holy Spirit (the "one baptism" of the Spirit), have been born again by God's Spirit, and are united to Christ by faith. Thus: *"You were included in Christ when you heard the Word of truth ... and, having believed (faith), were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit" (Ephesians 1:13).*

Amid the efforts to promote and establish a man-made organizational unity based on human standards, God calls us to *"Make every effort to **KEEP** (maintain) the unity of the Spirit,"* reminding us that we are already united IN Christ and that we are called to *"one hope, one LORD, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all" (ALL who are IN Him) (Ephesians 4:4-6).*

We call our brothers and sisters in Christ to join us in laying aside all man-made teaching, tradition and denominational titles in order to declare to the world our unity in Christ and to proclaim clearly the true Gospel: that true fellowship with God and with the people of God (*1 John 1:3*) is through grace alone, in Christ alone, by faith alone, for the glory of God alone.

We believe that the one true God, who has revealed Himself through His creation so that men are without excuse, has also revealed Himself through the written Word, and finally, in His Son, Jesus Christ, true God in human flesh (*Hebrews 1:1-3; Colossians 2:9*). Because our unity is IN Christ, only those who by true faith receive Christ as their Savior and acknowledge Him as their LORD are able to experience and express the unity described in God's Word.

We call all who have been given the gift of such faith by God's grace to express our unity, based on the suffering and death of Christ on the cross, testifying to His resurrection, His exaltation to the right hand of the Father and His coming to reign, as we unite ourselves in confessing Him to our world and serving our world in love, and as we proclaim the message of salvation IN Christ, calling others to join the community of faith. To that end, we put forth the following truths as the only basis for a true biblical unity, based on the One who is Himself the Way, the Truth and the Life.

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# The Word Alone

## Scripture: the Word Alone

*We confess the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments to be the sole source of divine revelation (aside from creation), given by God to mankind to reveal Himself, His plan of salvation and the only way of Life through His Son Jesus Christ. The Bible alone teaches all that is necessary for our deliverance from God's righteous judgment against our sin through faith in His Son Jesus Christ, and is the standard by which all Christian behavior must be measured. We declare that no creed, council or individual may add to or subtract from any rule of faith and practice, claiming the same or higher authority than the written Word of God, and further, that the Holy Spirit does not speak independently of or contrary to what is set forth in the Bible, nor is personal spiritual experience a source of divine revelation, bearing the same authority as the written Word of God.*

We affirm this truth in contrast to what much of the church today is practicing, being guided too often by cultural sensitivity, political correctness and the desire to make man the center of God's purpose, rather than His own glory. We view all modern ideas of psychology, sociology, marketing techniques and self-improvement theories as secondary to Scripture, which alone is able to say, "God says ...," and which is sufficient for all we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of God (*II Peter 1:3-4*). All necessary truth, moral authority and spiritual guidance which is essential for all generations through all time has been and is found in the revealed and written Word of God.

We call our brothers and sisters in Christ to proclaim the Gospel of Christ as the only means of being reconciled to God, and the law of God as our only response of thankfulness for God's gift of life by His grace through faith in Jesus. Biblical truth must be presented as necessary and sufficient for the Christian life, growth and discipline. While the work of the Holy Spirit is necessary in understanding and applying Scripture to our lives, the Spirit does not speak independently of Scripture. The biblical Word, rather than individual spiritual experience, is the final test of truth and authority.

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# Christ Alone

## Christ Alone

***We confess that our righteousness before God and thus our eternal salvation is accomplished by the one sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. As our Mediator, He became our representative, our substitute, the "second Adam," and in suffering God's wrath against our sin He satisfied the justice of God, thus freeing all who believe from the guilt and power of sin. His perfect life and substitutionary payment alone are sufficient for our justification and reconciliation to the Father. The preaching of the Gospel must include this truth or the good news loses its power to save, and is therefore no gospel at all.***

The need for proclaiming this truth today in order for people who are lost to be brought out of darkness into the light and freedom of Christ has become secondary to the desire among many to meet the felt needs of the culture. Rather than proclaiming the intrusion of the Kingdom of God into modern culture, drawing people to Christ, the Church instead has sought to adapt the Gospel to suit the willingness of people to accept it. The obvious result is a loss of absolute truth or values, leading to permissive individualism. We thus hear ideas of men being substituted for truth from God: "wholeness" rather than holiness; "recovery" rather than repentance; "intuition" rather than truth; "feeling" rather than belief; "chance" rather than providence; and "immediate gratification" rather than enduring hope.

We must call our brothers and sisters to confess again that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to all who believe, for in the Gospel the righteousness of Christ is received by faith. We must call those to whom we speak to place their hope in Christ, for it is in Him and Him alone that we are justified by God, reconciled to God, born again and renewed. Only in union with Christ can we receive God's gift of eternal life and bear fruit for Christ's kingdom (*John 3:3-5; 15:1-8*).

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# Grace Alone

## Grace Alone

***We confess that as God's justice can be satisfied by the sacrifice of Christ alone, so we become recipients of the benefits of Christ's suffering and death by grace alone. It is not through any of our own deserving or by our own wisdom or by our own power that we become heirs of eternal life, but solely by God's undeserved favor, through the merit of Christ. The work of the very Spirit of God is necessary to bring our dead spirits to life and to move us to receive God's gift of life in His Son. No human endeavor, techniques or strategies by themselves can accomplish this work. Only God's grace brings life from death and transforms our hearts and minds, moving us to respond to God's call in the Gospel.***

By denying the total depravity and spiritual deadness of mankind the modern human mind puts its hope in itself to contribute to its salvation. Scripture does not allow us to have such an optimistic view of human nature. We are *"by nature, children of wrath"* (Ephesians 2:3). With Jeremiah we confess that *"the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked"* (Jeremiah 17:9), and that like the leopard, who cannot change his spots, we cannot turn and do good; it is not in us. We declare that should we need to initiate or even cooperate in our salvation, we would be forever lost. Putting confidence in ourselves produces self-pride and leads to all manner of "self-improvement" theories which rob God of His glory.

Rather, we call our brothers and sisters to proclaim God's grace from the mountaintops, for this is the good news which the world needs to hear. *"God SO loved the world that He gave His only Son ..."* (John 3:16). God's grace is the sole cause of His work for our salvation. We are indebted to God's grace for life and breath and every good gift and it is the motivation for our worship, for giving thanks, and for a life of obedience.

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# Faith Alone

## Faith Alone

***We confess that the instrument by which we receive God's gift of life in Jesus Christ is faith alone. Our justification before God depends not upon any merit found in us or performed by us, but only in the merit of Christ, received by faith. "The work of God is this: to believe in the One He has sent" (John 6:29). We confess further that this faith is not the product of our own wisdom or effort, but is itself the gift of God to those whom He chooses by His sovereign grace (Ephesians 2:8-9). It is God, by His Spirit and Word, who regenerates our dead spirits and who empowers our new nature to say, "Yes" to His offer of life in the Gospel.***

It has been said that "justification by faith alone" is the article upon which the church stands or falls. Much of the church has fallen, as it declares man's ability not only to earn God's favor, but also man's ability to respond in faith to God's call to believe. Those who would declare that God chose us on the basis of a faith which He foreknew we would produce, also make man's own decision the determining factor for salvation, thus robbing God of His sovereignty and glory (*Ephesians 1:4; 2:8-9; John 1:12-13*). We declare again that we are saved from God's just judgment against our sin by grace alone through faith alone and that our salvation is God's work from beginning to end (*Philippians 1:6; 2:12-13*).

This truth does not remove God's call to do good works, for "*we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has prepared beforehand for us to do*" (*Ephesians 2:10*). These good works flow from a heart transformed by the love and grace of God in Christ Jesus by the power of His Spirit. They are the fruit of justification by faith, not in any way the cause of it. "*Faith without works is dead*" (*James 2:17*), precisely because the Spirit of God always produces the "*fruit of the Spirit*" in the lives of those in whom He dwells (*Philippians 2:12-13*).

Finally, any righteousness we might produce would be, as Isaiah describes it, "*as filthy rags,*" (*Isaiah 64:6*) before a holy and just God. Only the righteousness of Christ, imputed to us (credited to our account) when we respond in faith to the Gospel, is sufficient to stand before the judgment seat of God (*II Corinthians 5:21*). And we can receive His righteousness by faith alone. Only such faith produces the sure and certain hope of eternal life which God promises to those who believe, thus removing the sting of death and giving victory to those who are IN Christ.

We call our brothers and sisters in Christ to embrace this truth without compromise and to offer assurance to those who have put their trust in Christ alone that their sins are forgiven and that they are holy in the sight of God through faith alone in the one sacrifice of Christ. Such faith will produce a joyful and heartfelt life of obedience to the One who is faithful to those who call upon Him in the Name that is above every Name, the Name of Jesus!

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# The Glory of God Alone

## The Glory of God Alone

***We confess that the chief purpose of God in salvation is His own glory. Mankind exists for the praise of God's glory and grace (Ephesians 1:3-13). Only by declaring God's sovereignty, in revelation and in salvation, does God receive the glory due Him as our Creator, our Savior, our Redeemer and our Sustainer. Neither our happiness, nor our honor, is God's ultimate goal, but rather His own glory. We therefore declare that our highest purpose in life, now and for eternity, is to glorify our Creator.***

The message of many within the Church today presents man's happiness as God's highest goal and man's comfort as God's responsibility. While God does shower His creatures with blessing after blessing, neither our happiness nor our comfort are God's highest purpose in our lives. Our worship, which includes living all of life for the praise of God's glory, is directed towards this ultimate purpose of God: His own glory. Our personal preferences, our daily choices and decisions, our plans and our very wills must all be surrendered to this one holy purpose: to give glory to the One who alone is worthy!

We call our brothers and sisters in Christ to consider these truths revealed in God's Word as the voice of God calling us away from the world so that we may find in Him alone our greatest joy and our only hope. Believing that the Church has been called to reveal the manifold wisdom of God (Ephesians 3:10-11) and to be the pillar and foundation of the truth (I Timothy 3:15), we commit ourselves and all that we have and are to proclaiming the fullness of God's revelation of Himself to HIS world, confident that He will provide us with all we need to accomplish His eternal purpose until Jesus Christ returns to establish His kingdom in the new heavens and the new earth.