

# Statement of Faith

We believe and the Bible teaches that there is only one God and that He is a unique being.<sup>1</sup> He alone has no beginning or end. He possesses many unique and limitless attributes such as omnipotence and omniscience. He created the entire universe, including the human race, from nothing.<sup>2</sup> His nature is unique: he is one God consisting of three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.<sup>3</sup> His nature is beyond the ability of human reason to comprehend. Instead of this frustrating us, it fills us with awe.

We believe and the Bible teaches that there will always be a vital distinction between God, our Creator, and us his creatures.<sup>4</sup> We further believe that sin immensely widened the gap between God and humans. Adam's fall into sin was the worst catastrophe in history. It brought physical, spiritual, and eternal death into the world and wreaked havoc in mankind's relationship with God.<sup>5</sup> The fall caused the human race to become totally enslaved to sin so that no one naturally seeks the true God or does any good.<sup>6</sup> All, by nature, are hostile to God.<sup>7</sup> Sin has so completely corrupted the human race that no one has the capacity to bridge this sin-caused gap and reconcile themselves to God.<sup>8</sup>

We believe and the Bible teaches that God, out of unfathomable love (grace), closed this gap himself and reconciled the world to himself<sup>9</sup> He did this solely and completely through his Son, Jesus Christ who is true God from all eternity.<sup>10</sup> The Son of God took upon himself a human nature to become our substitute. He lived a perfect life keeping all the commandments for us, providing the righteousness we need to live with God.<sup>11</sup> He then died on the cross as payment for all sin.<sup>12</sup> By living and dying for us Jesus left nothing undone. His glorious resurrection serves as wonderful proof that he was totally successful in his saving mission.<sup>13</sup> We are saved by grace alone through the work of Jesus Christ alone.<sup>14</sup> We further believe that basing any part of salvation in any way on human works ruins salvation.<sup>15</sup>

We believe and the Bible teaches that individuals receive all the benefits of Christ's work through faith alone.<sup>16</sup> Faith is childlike trust in Jesus' work on our behalf. Repentance is nothing else than the change of mind from trusting in one's own works to be saved to trusting in the work of Jesus. Faith alone saves but faith is never alone. Trust in Jesus inevitably produces works pleasing to God. It is vitally important to see that such works are the result of being saved and do not, in any sense, contribute to salvation.<sup>17</sup>

We believe and the Bible teaches that faith itself is a gift of God, created in individuals solely by the Holy Spirit.<sup>18</sup> Even here God takes the initiative to bridge the gap. This was necessary because all, being dead in sin, could do nothing to come to faith themselves. The Holy Spirit creates faith only through the gospel, the good news of Jesus' saving work on our behalf.<sup>19</sup> The gospel is marvelously revealed in the Bible - the only book miraculously inspired by the Holy Spirit.<sup>20</sup>

We believe and the Bible teaches that the gospel is also miraculously transmitted through baptism and the Lord's Supper - the Holy Spirit working powerfully through both. He uses baptism to produce faith and save people.<sup>21</sup> He uses the Lord's Supper to strengthen believers' faith by conveying the forgiveness of sins through it.<sup>22</sup> Baptism and the Lord's Supper are not works believers do for God. They are wonderful blessings through which God powerfully works in people.

We believe and the Bible teaches that Jesus will come again and bring God's work of reconciliation to its ultimate conclusion.<sup>23</sup> All those who have received Christ's righteousness as their own through faith will spend a wondrous eternity in God's presence. All those who place any hope on their own works or actions ruin Christ's perfect work for them. They will be declared imperfect and will spend a horrible eternity in hell.<sup>24</sup>

We believe and the Bible teaches that one of the most important acts of love we can do is to share the wonderful news of God's free salvation through faith in Jesus alone so that more will spend eternity in heaven. Truth in Love Ministry exists to do just that.

**Footnotes** Note: Often a number of passages could be cited for each point. The following are just representative of many. 1. Isaiah 45:5 2. Hebrews 11:3 3. There is no single Bible passage that describes God's unique nature. It is derived from the fact that the Bible clearly states that there is only one God (i.e. Isaiah 45:5). But it also says the Father is God (John 17:3), the Son is God (Philippians 2:6) and the Holy Spirit is God (Acts 5:3-4). This tri-unity is also seen in Jesus' command to baptize in the name (singular) of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). 4. This distinction between the Creator and his creatures is illustrated by the reverence of the angels in Isaiah's vision (Isaiah 6:1-3). 5. Romans 5:17-18 6. Romans 3:10-12 7. Romans 8:7 8. Ephesians 2:1-3 9. 2 Corinthians 1:18-19 10. John 1:1 11. Romans 5:19 12. Hebrews 10:10 & 14 13. Romans 4:25 14. Romans 3:22-24 15. Romans 11:6 16. Ephesians 2:8-9 17. Ephesians 2:8-10. Note how this passage clearly states that we are not saved by works but we are saved to do good works. 18. I Corinthians 12:3 19. Romans 1:16 20. 2 Timothy 3:16 21. 1 Peter 3:21 22. Matthew 26:28, 1 Cor. 10:16 23. Acts 1:9-11 24. John 3:16-18. Note that Jesus only takes about faith in this discussion of who is condemned and not condemned. Works are not in the picture. Matthew 25:46