

PERSONAL STATEMENT OF FAITH – by Marvel Hitson

Creator:

I believe in one God, the Creator of all, who is Holy, Sovereign, Loving and deserving of all Glory. I believe that we are created to be in eternal relationship to God the Father, through whom “we live and move and have our being.” (Acts 17:28). I believe that all things visible and invisible have been created through God and for God, and in God all things hold together. (Col. 1:16-17)

Redeemer:

I believe in Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, the Word of God made flesh, who lived among and identified with us. I believe that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, redeems us and makes us a new creation. Living a redeemed life in the love of Christ compels us to live not for ourselves, but for the One through whom God has reconciled us to Godself - Jesus. As Christ’s ambassadors given the ministry of reconciliation, we share the message of redemption and eternal peace with God. (2 Cor. 5:14-20)

Sustainer:

I believe in the Holy Spirit – the Spirit of Truth- who is with us and sustains us forever. I believe the Holy Spirit is our advocate, teacher and giver of peace. (John 14:26-27)

I believe that God is one in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. I believe in the relational and loving dynamic of the three in one - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. I believe that Jesus prays that we be one as well, and that the love with which He is loved will also be in us. (John 17:21-26)

Scripture:

I believe in the authority of Scripture – the Word of God which governs life and faith. I believe that God gives us words of life through Scripture and teaches us God’s will for our lives and for humanity. I believe that through Scripture (Old and New Testaments), we are taught how to put our faith in practice. The Word of God is living, and we are to “hide it” in our hearts, “rejoice in following” and “meditate on” the Lord’s precepts and statutes. (Psalm 119:11,14-15) I believe Scripture interprets Scripture and when certain areas are unclear, we ought to seek further understanding within God’s Word through the help of the Holy Spirit.

Humanity:

I believe that God created Man and Woman in God’s image and intends for us to live in communion with God and all of God’s creation. Because of our sinful nature as humans, we are prone to forget our true identity as beloved children of God. Because of God’s great love for us, God sent his only Son, so that whosoever believes can have the gift of eternal life. (John 3:16) We can live in the confidence of God’s love because “The Spirit testifies with our Spirit that we are God’s children” and “co-heirs with Christ”. (Romans 8:16-17).

Jesus, Atonement and Salvation by Grace through Faith:

God sent Jesus Christ (fully human and fully divine) to live among us and to take on the punishment of sin and death upon His shoulders even though there was no sin in Him, in order to redeem us and seal us in the way of a new covenant. When we are in Christ, the old has gone and the new has come. We can be reconciled and have peace with God through Jesus and be assured of eternal life by grace through faith. I believe that though all have sinned, we are “justified freely by grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus” because “God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith.” (Romans 3:23-25).

The Church and the Sacraments:

I believe in the communion of the saints. The Church (visible and invisible) is gathered under Christ who is the head of the Church (Colossians 1:15-18). I do believe that the marks of the true church are: the Sacraments (Baptism and Communion) rightly administered, the Word of God rightly preached and church discipline faithfully administered.

I believe the Sacraments were instituted by Christ and are an outward sign of an inward grace. With the act of remembrance whenever we “eat this bread and drink this cup”, we “proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.” (1 Co 11:26) In Baptism, the water signifies forgiveness and new life in Christ. During Communion and Baptism we affirm and proclaim our faith in God and offer gratitude for these gifts of grace. We are also called to go into all the world and “make disciples of all nations” as commanded in Matthew 28:19-20, “baptizing and teaching in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.”

Eschatology:

I believe that Christ will come again and there will be a new heaven and a new earth where God will dwell with his people and wipe every tear from our eyes. (Rev. 21:1-4)

I also believe that even as we await Christ’s return, we have been taught to pray for God’s kingdom to come and will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. (Matt. 6:9-10)

Our certain hope is that God is with us now and forever. I believe that as followers of Jesus, we are the visible and tangible expression of God’s love in this hurting world, and we are to proclaim by word and deed the hope of Christ. Therefore, we are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds (Romans 12:2) and dedicated to service as described in Romans 12:9-18 through devotion to one another in love as we serve the Lord.