

Summary of Westminster Standards

We believe and stand upon, as our **Statement of Faith**, the Westminster Standards, including the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Westminster Larger Catechism, and the Westminster Shorter Catechism.

Of Scriptures

We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be fully inspired by God. They are without error in their original autographs, and God has sovereignly and providentially preserved His Word so that the Scriptures we have are fully reliable and complete. There is nothing lacking which is needful for our understanding apart from the illuminating work of the Holy Spirit. As 1Peter 1:4 says, "God has given us EVERYTHING necessary for life and godliness." Thus, to add to God's word with new revelation is sinful and especially deceitful.

The Word of God is characterized by 4 traits and therefore God's word is to be the ground of all faith. 1) God's word is necessary. 2) God's word is authoritative. 3) God's word is perspicuous (clear). 4) God's word is sufficient.

Of God

We believe that there is but one God. This God is only known by His self-revelation; in nature by general revelation, and in Scripture as special revelation. There is no other way to know God but as He has revealed himself. God is a spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth. He has chosen to reveal himself as a triune God. This is to say that there are three persons within the Godhead, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. They are the same in substance and equal in power and glory.

God is wholly different from his creation and is in no way dependent upon anything outside of himself for anything. He is fully independent and sovereign in all things. God rules over all things according to his own sovereign pleasure and works all things according to the council of his own will. By His providence, he powerfully, wisely and holily, preserves and governs all his creatures and all their actions.

To Him is due from angels and men, and every other creature, whatsoever worship, service, or obedience He is pleased to require of them. To worship any other god than the triune God revealed in Scripture to be in a state of rebellion and sin and liable to His wrath.

Of Creation

We believe that It pleased God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for the manifestation of the glory of His eternal power, wisdom, and goodness, in the beginning, to create, or make of nothing, the world, and all things therein whether visible or invisible, in the space of six days, without the use of intermediate agents or evolutions and all very good.

After God had made all other creatures, He created man, male and female, with reasonable and immortal souls, endued with knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, after His own image; having

the law of God written in their hearts, and power to fulfil it; and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own will, which was subject unto change.

When God had created man, he entered into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of perfect obedience. Beside this law written in their hearts, they received a command, not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; which while they kept, they were happy in their communion with God, and had dominion over the creatures.

Of Man's Fall

Adam was mankind's representative before God. Therefore, whatever Adam did in obedience or disobedience was accounted to all of his descendants. When Adam disobeyed God and ate the forbidden fruit, Adam and all who would come from Him, fell from their state of innocence and into a state of sin and misery. Mankind's original righteousness was lost and man's ability to do anything good and pleasing to God was destroyed. He was dead in his sins, and every aspect of man was corrupted so that nothing has been left unstained by sin. Thus, no one does good and no one seeks God. Out of this original sin, flows all actual sin. Man sins because man is now a sinner by nature and deserves God's wrath and displeasure on account of his sinfulness.

Of Christ the Mediator

It pleased Triune God to ordain the Second person of the Trinity to be the mediator between God and man- the Prophet, Priest and King. Being fully God, of one substance with the Father, when the fullness of the time was come, Jesus took upon himself a human nature with all of its essential properties. Yet, He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, in the womb of the virgin Mary, and not by natural generation. Therefore, Jesus has two complete natures joined together in One person, without conversion, composition, or confusion. He is fully God and fully man, yet One Christ, the only mediator between God and man.

Being fully God, Jesus could not and did not sin, yet was tempted in all ways. Just as Adam was the covenant figure head of all of sinful man, so too is Christ the covenant figure head of all of God's elect. The Lord Jesus did earn redemption for the elect both by his perfect obedience and by his substitutionary death. Therefore, for all those whom Jesus has purchased redemption, he makes sure, by the work of His Spirit in regeneration to grant to them the faith to believe and rest upon Christ alone as their savior.

Of Saving Faith

True saving faith is created in the person by the power of the Holy Spirit. Such people, having had faith implanted within them at the moment of their regeneration, exercise their faith in Jesus Christ and believes that Christ alone is sufficient to declare them righteous (justification) and to make them righteous (sanctification). According to the faith, the Christian believes to be true whatsoever is revealed in the Bible because it is God's Word. Though this faith might vary in degrees, weak or strong, and can be assailed in many different ways, this true faith will get the victory because the origin of faith is the Spirit of Christ and not the will of man.

Of Good Works

Our deeds are not deemed to be good in the eyes of God on any other ground than the prescribing commandments of God. Man's opinion of what is good is most often at variance with what God has revealed. Likewise, good intentions are insufficient to make a deed good. Only those deeds done with faith Christ, in obedience to God's commands, aiming at the glory of God alone, and flowing from a heart of gratitude are considered by God to be good.

Works done by unbelievers, even if they are used by God for some good benefit, in no way count for a good deed. Additionally, because they proceed not from faith or from gratitude, and because they are not aiming at the glory of God, such works do not please God, but rather continue to heap up God's judgment.

Of the Law of God

God gave Adam a law, obligations under the covenant of works, which bound Adam and all his descendants to personal, entire, exact, and perpetual obedience. Blessings were promised for the fulfilling of the law, and curses for the breaking of it. Adam was also endowed with the ability to keep the law. This law was written on the hearts of man, so that man is without excuse.

After the fall of man, this law continued to be in force and is the grounds upon which all unbelievers will be judged. This law was perfectly revealed on Mount Sinai in the Ten Commandments, which was recorded on two tables, the first containing man's duty toward God and the second containing man's duty toward others.

Although true believers are no longer under the law AS A COVENANT OF WORKS believers are still to obey the 10 commandments because they reveal how believers are to rightly love God. This third use of the law is essential to the believer so that the believer might discover the remaining pollutions of sin, and their remaining need for the transforming power of the Spirit.

Of the Church

The true church is universal in its scope, crossing all geographical, chronological and denominational lines. It is invisible and consists of all of those elect that have actually been enabled to trust in Christ alone for their salvation.

The visible church consists of those professing faith in Jesus Christ alone for salvation, and their children. Within the visible church there will be both those who are true believers and those who are merely professors, and this mixture of sheep and goats will ebb and flow through the course of time according to the ministry of the Word and the sovereign pleasure of God. In some ages or in some locations the church will be more visible or less visible.

God has given to the church the keys to the kingdom of heaven, the ordinary means of grace, the Holy Scriptures and elders and deacons for the gathering and sanctifying of the elect. There is no head of the church but the Lord Jesus Christ.

Of Right Worship

Being created by God for the purpose of worshipping God, yet corrupted by sin, all men worship something or someone. Yet, the acceptable way of worship is instituted by God himself and necessarily excludes the worship of anyone or anything other than Him. Man is not free to use his imaginations, his opinions, idols or any images of God in worship, but is commanded by God to worship according to His revealed will. Acceptable worship is made in the name of the Son, by the help of the Holy Spirit, according to God's will, with faith, understanding, reverence, humility fervency, love, and perseverance, and if vocal, in a known tongue.

Of the Sacraments

The Sacraments are holy signs and seals of the covenant of grace. They were instituted by God to represent Christ and his benefits. They were given to the church for the edification of the church and to put a visible difference between those who belong to the Church and the rest of the world.

The grace which is exhibited in the sacraments rightly used, is not conferred by any power in them, or by the sincerity and holiness (or lack thereof) of the minister administering it, but only according to the sovereign good pleasure of the Holy Spirit.

There are only two sacraments, covenant baptism, and the Lord's Supper. These two sacraments of the New Testament, in regard to spiritual things signified, are of the same substance as the two sacraments of the Old Testament, namely circumcision and Passover.

Of Marriage

The term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Gen 2:18-25.) We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (1 Cor 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb 13:4.) We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

God ordained marriage for the mutual help of husband and wife, for the increase of mankind through legitimate children, and for the preventing of sexual and other sins.

Of Church Government

For the better governance of the church, and the further edification of the Body, there ought to be such assemblies as are commonly called Synods or Councils. To these synods or councils belong the authority to hold accountable local assemblies for their doctrine and practice. These synods are to consist of representatives from the local assemblies.

These synods are to determine controversies of the faith and cases of conscience. They are to set down rules and directions for the ordering of public worship and government of the local church. Their decisions are to be received humbly and reverently if they agree to the Word of God. All synods or councils, since the time of the Apostles, whether general or particular may err, and in fact many have. Therefore, they are not to be made the rule of faith or practice, but to be used as a help for both.

The authority of synods or councils is exclusively ecclesiastical, though they should at all times be prepared to advise the civil government in cases of morality and conscience.

Of Church discipline

Church discipline is a necessary part of the ministry of the church. It is necessary for the reclaiming and gaining of offending brethren, for deterring others from like offenses, for purging out that leaven which might infect the whole lump, for vindicating the honor of Christ, and for the preventing of the wrath of God. A church that does not disciple and discipline its members will inevitably fail to maintain the gospel. Such discipline is to be truthful and obedient to God's word and exercised with great humility and grace, but ever maintaining and pursuing the righteousness of God so as not to excuse sin.

Of Civil Government

God has ordained civil government for the public good. To this end God has given it the power of the sword for the defense and encouragement of its moral citizens and for the punishment of evil doers. The civil government should not interfere in any matters of the faith, but should regularly and humbly petition the church for wise council concerning moral law.

Of the End Times

God has appointed a final day on which he will judge all of mankind. On that day Christ will return bodily and the elect will glorify God by means of his mercy and will enter into eternal rest. Whereas, the reprobate will glorify God by means of his justice and will be cast into eternal punishment. Other than these two places, there is no other place to spend eternity. The final resting place of all people will be assigned and there will be no temporary place such as purgatory.

On that day, all men will be resurrected bodily and will have to give an account of their thoughts, words and actions. The elect will be looking unto their beloved Christ but the reprobate will seek to hide from the holy Judge.

In light of the second Coming of Jesus, all men are exhorted to be watchful and ready.