

Terry Marks: Statement of Faith

I believe there is but one true and living and eternal God. I believe God is transcendent and, yet immanent. I further believe that God is sovereign over all things created, infinite, immeasurable, incomprehensible, omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent; God is invisible, one in substance, and yet distinctively in three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit¹ [collectively referenced as the Godhead or Holy Trinity]. I believe God is a most holy and pure spirit who is to be worshipped, served and obeyed. I have a profound fear of God and yet, I am convinced that God loves me and would never harm me.

I believe Jesus to be the second Person in the Holy Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance, and equal with the Father, did, when the fullness of time was come, take upon him humanity's nature² and who is the Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One) and Savior of the world and the Word of God become flesh. I believe he was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of virgin birth.³ I believe he lived a sinless and perfect life and is the unblemished lamb of God who died on the cross as the redemptive price of sinful men and women [all humankind]. Although I revere and worship him as Lord; as one who is the youngest of eight children (five boys and three girls), I also see him as my first-born big brother.

I believe the Holy Spirit to be the third Person of the Godhead and Holy Trinity, proceeding from the Father and the Son, equal in power and glory and of the same substance.⁴ I believe that it is by the power and Spirit of God that humanity is regenerated through the conviction of sin and stirred to repentance. I believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer and that the Holy Spirit, divinely inspired the writers of Holy Scriptures. So much regarding the Holy Spirit remains a mystery to me; yet, I believe the Church today, and yours truly, have room for greater reliance upon the Spirit's leading.

I believe the Church is the visible body of Christ by which he is head. I believe this visible church is universal and reflective of the kingdom Christ comprised of believers worldwide who profess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. I believe the mission of the church is to "go" into all the world and make disciples (Matthew 28:19-20). Although the terms 'disciples' and 'members' may be interchangeable to a degree, I fear much greater emphasis is placed on the latter which, in some respects, may account for expansion challenges within the body.

I believe in that the canon of Holy Scripture comprises of the Old and New Testaments of the Protestant Bible and that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16). I believe the Holy Scriptures are God's authoritative and reliable Word and that those called to teach and preach the Word of God are to "be diligent to present [oneself] approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15).

I believe in the sacraments of baptism (including infant baptism) and the Lord's Supper as holy seals and signs established by God as a reflection of God's covenant of grace and representation of our relationship in Christ and obedience to his Word.

I believe that the same eternal God and Creator, who by grace alone chose us before the foundation of the world was laid to be joint heirs with his Son, Christ Jesus, whom God appointed to the savior of our souls and the great shepherd of our lives.⁵

¹ The Scots Confession, *Book of Confessions*, 3.01

² The Westminster Confession of Faith, *Book of Confessions*, 6.044

³ The Apostle's Creed, *Book of Confessions*, 2.2

⁴ The Westminster Confession of Faith, *Book of Confessions*, 6.183

⁵ The Scots Confession, *Book of Confessions*, 3.08