



Confession of Faith

Calvary Reformed Church, Orland Park

1. The Doctrine of God

We believe in one God, eternally existent in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The three persons of the Godhead or Trinity are not three gods, but one God in essence—united in nature, will, and purpose. All three persons participate in providing the opportunity for man to be saved - the Father planned, the Son accomplished, and the Holy Spirit applies. All three persons deserve worship.

Scriptural Support: Genesis 1:1-2, Deuteronomy 6:4, Matthew 3:16-17, Matthew 28:19, John 1:1-2, 2 Corinthians 13:14

1.2 God the Father

God the Father is eternal, sovereign, holy, and unchanging. He is the creator and sustainer of all things visible and invisible. His infinite wisdom, power, and love are gloriously displayed in His works of creation and providence. God the Father eternally begat Jesus the Son. God the Father planned the redemption of all mankind then sent Jesus the Son into the world to accomplish it.

Scriptural Support: Exodus 34:6-7a, Isaiah 45:5-7; John 3:16, John 5:26, Galatians 4:4 Hebrews 1:5

1.3 God the Son

We confess Jesus Christ as the eternal Son of God, present at creation and used by God the Father as the means by which He created everything. Through His virgin birth, He was fully God and fully man. Christ's sinless life, substitutionary atoning death, and bodily resurrection accomplished the work of salvation for all who believe in Him. Jesus ascended into Heaven and is the only mediator between God and Man. He is the head of the Church. Jesus will return to judge the living and the dead.

Scriptural Support: John 1:1-14; John 5:22, Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:15-20; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 Timothy 2:5

1.4 God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the eternal Godhead. The Spirit indwells believers, regenerating them and enabling them to confess Christ, repent of sin, live holy lives, and fulfill their calling as witnesses of Christ.

The Holy Spirit is a seal that acts as a guarantee of a believer's salvation. The Holy Spirit assists believers in prayer, comforts them, and fills them with the fruit of the spirit. The Holy Spirit distributes spiritual gifts, helps believers to understand scripture, and empowers them to share the love of God to the world.

Scriptural Support: John 16:7-15; Acts 1:8; Romans 8:9-11; Romans 15:13, 1 Corinthians 2:10-13, 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, 2 Corinthians 13:14, Galatians 5:22-23, Ephesians 1:13-14, Ephesians 5:18-19, Titus 3:5-6, Jude 1:20-21

2. The Doctrine of Scripture

We affirm the divine inspiration, inerrancy, and authority of the Holy Scriptures. The sixty-six books that make up the Bible are the infallible Word of God, sufficient for all matters of faith, practice, and doctrine. The Bible reveals the will of God for salvation and godly living through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, and it alone is the final standard by which all teaching, traditions, and cultural trends must be tested.

The veracity of the Bible has been corroborated by historians, archeologists, and scientists, and there is more manuscript evidence for the correct transfer of the facts of the Bible than any other book in history by far.

Scriptural Support: Psalm 119:105; Isaiah 40:8; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Revelation 22:18-19

3. The Doctrine of Humanity

Man's ultimate purpose is to worship, serve, and glorify God. Humanity was created in the image of God, designed for fellowship with Him and for stewardship of His creation. However, through Adam's fall, all humanity became sinful by nature and action, resulting in physical and spiritual death. This sin separates us from God and places us under His just judgment for all time.

Scriptural Support: Genesis 1:26-27; Genesis 3; Romans 1:21-22; Romans 3:23; Romans 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3; Hebrews 9:27

4. The Doctrine of Salvation

Because God loves us, He sent His Son Jesus to save us. His sacrificial death on the cross satisfies God's righteous wrath against our sin.

God moves in the hearts of men and women, convicting them of sin, producing repentance and granting faith to trust in the work of Christ. Those who place their faith in Christ by confessing with their mouths and believing in their hearts are justified, adopted into God's eternal family, sealed with the Holy Spirit, and equipped for spiritual growth.

Because salvation is a work of God, those who have been redeemed will continue in holiness to the end, because God sustains them. Believers can enjoy full assurance of their salvation. Ultimately transformed at the resurrection and freed from sin and death, they will enjoy eternal fellowship with God and each other in Heaven.

Salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, to the glory of God alone.

Scriptural Support: John 14:16-18; Acts 4:12; Romans 1:16-17; Romans 3:21-26; Romans 10:9-10; Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:4-7

Footnotes for Doctrine of Salvation

Effectual Calling	Internal, irresistible call	Rom 8:30, 1 Cor 1:24
Regeneration	New birth by the Spirit	John 3:3-8, Titus 3:5
Conversion	Repentance and faith	Acts 20:21, Phil 1:29
Justification	Declared righteous in Christ	Rom 5:1, 2 Cor 5:21
Adoption	Made sons and daughters of God	Rom 8:15-17, Gal 4:4-7
Sanctification	Growing in holiness	1 Thess 4:3, 2 Cor 3:18
Perseverance	Endurance by God's power	John 6:38-40, John 10:28, Phil 1:6
Glorification	Final resurrection glory	Rom 8:30, 1 John 3:2

5. The Doctrine of Christian Living

Christians are called to live a life that pleases God and sets themselves apart from the world, to live lives of holiness, gratitude, love, and stewardship, bearing witness to the transforming power of the gospel. By the Spirit's enabling, believers seek to obey God's commandments and cultivate Christlike character as revealed in scripture. Truly converted people will demonstrate a change of heart and will have a desire to grow in holiness, service, and love. Christians will give an account for their lives before Christ.

Scriptural Support: Matthew 5:13-16; Matthew 25:14-30; Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 5:9-10; 2 Corinthians 9:6-7; Galatians 5:16-25; 1 Peter 1:14-16; 1 Peter 4:10

6. The Doctrine of the Christian Church

The Church is not a building, institution, or mere human organization, but the Body of Christ, composed of all who have been truly saved. Christ is the Head of the Church, and believers are united to Him and one another by the Holy Spirit.

The universal Church consists of all true believers across all times and places, while the local church is a covenant community of believers gathered for worship, fellowship, discipleship, service, and mission under the biblical leadership of pastors, elders, and deacons.

The Church upholds the authority of Scripture, the person and work of Jesus Christ, the proclamation of the gospel, the administering of the sacraments, and Christ's commission to make disciples of all nations.

Scriptural Support: Matthew 16:18, Matthew 28:19–20; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:42–47; Acts 20:28; Ephesians 1:22–23; 1 Corinthians 12:12–14; Galatians 1:6–9; I Timothy 3:1–13; Hebrews 10:24–25; 2 John 7–9

7. The Doctrine of the Sacraments

We believe that the sacraments are holy ordinances instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ as visible signs and seals of the covenant of grace. They are means of grace by which God confirms His promises to His people, strengthens their faith, and visibly marks them as members of His covenant community.

The sacraments are not mere symbols but are effectual means of grace for those who receive them by faith. They do not work by the mere act performed, but the Holy Spirit works through them to confirm and nourish the faith of believers.

There are only two sacraments instituted by Christ in the New Testament: **Baptism** and **the Lord's Supper**.

Scriptural Support: Genesis 17:7; Matthew 28:19–20; Luke 18:15–16; Luke 22:19–20; Luke 23:42–43; John 6:53–56; Acts 2:38–42; Acts 16:15, 33; Romans 4:11; Romans 6:3–4; 1 Corinthians 1:17; 1 Corinthians 10:16–17; 1 Corinthians 11:23–29; Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 2:8–9; Colossians 2:11–12; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 3:21

Footnotes on the Doctrine of the Sacraments

7.2 Baptism

Institution and Meaning

Baptism signifies and seals the washing away of sins through the blood of Christ, the regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit, and the believer's union with Christ in His death and resurrection.

Baptism itself does not bring about salvation or contribute to it; salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. However, Christ has commanded all who profess faith in Him and repentance of sin to be baptized, and believers should joyfully seek baptism as an act of obedience and public identification with Him.

Recipients of Baptism

- In accordance with God's covenant promises, the natural and adopted children (including infants) under the care and nurture of believing parents are also encouraged to be baptized. This does not presume regeneration, but is a sign of God's covenant faithfulness, calling the child to personal faith as they mature. (see note 7.4 below)

Mode and Validity

- Baptism may be administered by pouring, sprinkling, or immersion, with water applied in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Administration

Baptism is to be administered by an ordained minister or those duly appointed by the Board of Elders. The sacrament is customarily administered during public worship, as a visible testimony to the whole congregation.

7.3 The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ and regularly proclaims His death until He comes. This meal nourishes believers' faith, and through it they not only enjoy communion with Christ, but also with one another.

The Lord's Supper should be approached with preparation and anticipation, received with self-examination by all who have repented of their sins and trust in Christ alone for salvation. The Table is open to all believers who are in right standing with Christ.

- Bread and wine (or grape juice) are served as visible signs of Christ's body and blood.
- While the elements remain bread and wine, believers, by the power of the Holy Spirit, truly partake of Christ spiritually, receiving His grace and nourishment.

Administration

- The Lord's Supper is to be administered by an ordained minister or those duly appointed by the Board of Elders. Elders may also assign those specially trained and ordained to serve the Lord's Supper to those who are unable to attend regular worship.
- The sacrament is ordinarily observed during public worship, with prayer, the reading of Scripture, and the Words of Institution.

7.4 Special Note on Infant Baptism

We affirm that the covenant of grace, established with Abraham and fulfilled in Christ, includes the children of believers. In baptism, these children are received into the visible church, marked with the covenant sign, and set apart to be raised in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Parents (or guardians) who present their children for baptism vow before God and the congregation to teach them the truths of Scripture, to pray with and for them, to set a godly example, and to encourage them to trust in Christ alone for salvation.

The congregation also vows to assist in the Christian nurture of the baptized child, reflecting the covenant community's shared responsibility.

As the child matures, they are to be nurtured to salvation and a public profession of faith, at which time they will be welcomed to the Lord's Table.

Calvary Church understands that the doctrine of infant baptism may be challenging to some. After biblical counsel, those who conscientiously object to the practice may seek infant dedication instead.

Scriptural Support

Baptism:

- Institution: Matthew 28:19–20; Acts 2:38–39
- Significance: Romans 6:3–4; Galatians 3:27; Titus 3:5
- Covenant inclusion of children: Genesis 17:7; Luke 18:15–16; Acts 16:15, 33; Colossians 2:11–12
- Salvation apart from baptism: Luke 23:42–43; 1 Corinthians 1:17; Ephesians 2:8–9

The Lord's Supper:

- Institution: Luke 22:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–26
- Spiritual nourishment: John 6:53–56; 1 Corinthians 10:16–17
- Worthy participation: 1 Corinthians 11:27–29

Nature of Sacraments:

- Signs and seals: Romans 4:11; 1 Peter 3:21
- Means of grace: Acts 2:41–42; 1 Corinthians 10:16–17

8. The Doctrine of Last Things

We await the personal, visible, and glorious return of Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead with perfect justice and usher in His kingdom of righteousness. Believers will be resurrected with new glorified bodies, inherit eternal life, and dwell forever with God in the new heavens and new earth. Unbelievers will pay the penalty of eternal destruction and face complete separation from God in Hell.

Scriptural Support: Matthew 25:31-46; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; 2 Thessalonians 1:9; Rev. 20:11-15; Revelation 21:1-4

9. The Doctrine of Sovereignty and Grace

God rules over all things with absolute authority, power, and purpose. Nothing happens outside of God's will and control. God sovereignly chooses (elects) whom He will save—not based on foreseen faith or works, but according to His grace (unmerited favor) and purpose. However, God's sovereignty and human responsibility exist together without contradiction. Humans will be held accountable for the choices they make.

God causes all things to be directed toward His glory and for the good of His children. Even evil and suffering fall within God's sovereign plan and serve His greater purposes, though He Himself is not the author of sin.

Recognizing God's sovereign grace brings comfort and assurance to believers, knowing that their salvation is secure, and that God has a good purpose for all things according to His will.

Scriptural Support: Genesis 50:20; Proverbs 16:33; Acts 2:23; Romans 8:28; Romans 9:14-24; Romans 11:36; Ephesians 1:4–5; Ephesians 2:8–9; Colossians 1:16–17