

# CONVERGE

## Statement of Faith

### We who Converge are ...

... an affiliation of Christian college-age students crossing denominational lines in Las Vegas, NV who seek to reach the lost and equip the college-age generation for holiness, doctrine, and a passion and love for God. Thus we believe and affirm the following core doctrines of Christianity:

#### **I. The Scriptures**

We believe that the Bible (the Old and New Testaments, but at the exclusion of the deuterocanonical/apocryphal writings) was written by human beings under the inspiration (*divinitus inspirata*) of God and is His revelation of Himself to mankind. It is, in our best estimation, the inerrant and infallible Word of God. We uphold the verbal, plenary inspiration of Scripture though we do not necessarily subscribe to the “dictation theory” in defining such inspiration. We believe that the Bible is the exclusive source of doctrinal information and, therefore, affirm the doctrine of *sola Scriptura*. All Scripture is ultimately a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

*Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.*

#### **II. God**

We believe that God is one – that there is no other God than Himself – and thus it is to Him alone that we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. We affirm the Trinity of God – that He reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of substance (Gr: *ousios*). We believe that He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being; He is the Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, and Ruler of the universe and is the locus of all objective moral values. We affirm the aseity of God – that He is eternal, necessary, and self-existent. We affirm the justice of God – that He is no respecter of persons, that He

cannot fail to satisfy the requirements of *lex talionis* (“an eye for an eye;” i.e., there is an appropriate and “mirror” punishment for the crime), and that all of His actions are in accord with His perfect moral character. We affirm the omnipotence (“all-powerfulness”) of God in that He has maximal power consonant with His nature, and believe that He is sovereign over all creation. We affirm the omniscience (“all-knowingness”) of God and that His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. We affirm the omnipresence (“all-‘presentness’”) of God such that He is immediately accessible at every location and time; we reject all forms of pantheism because God is wholly distinct from His creation. We affirm the omnibenevolence (“all-goodness”) of God such that no action by God can possibly lack moral deficiency or acuity, and that God alone is intrinsically Holy.

*Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:2, 4-5, 14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:4, 6; 33:27; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; 90:2; 93:1; 95:3; Isaiah 6:3; 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; 23:20; Habakkuk 1:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 1:18; 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.*

### **III. Jesus Christ**

Christ is the promised messiah of ancient Judaism, the Son of God spoken of by Daniel the prophet. We believe the Second Person of the Trinity was incarnated as Jesus of Nazareth and was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. We affirm the biblical doctrine that the Second Person willfully “emptied himself” (Gr: *kenoo heatou*) by freely withholding and retaining His divine abilities in order to rely exclusively on the Father. We believe that Jesus was begotten, but not created. We affirm the impeccability of Christ and that He perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of mankind from sin. He was bodily raised from the dead with a transformed body and subsequently appeared to various people 40 days prior to His ascension into heaven where He is now exalted at the right hand of God maintaining His function as the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever-present Lord.

*Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus*

*2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.*

#### **IV. The Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand and embrace truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He draws all people to the Savior, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

*Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.*

#### **V. Man**

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image and likeness. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

*Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.*

#### **VI. Salvation**

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and

glorification and is assured by the ministry of the Holy Spirit. There is no salvation apart from Jesus Christ our Lord and, thus, we reject the doctrines of inclusivity and universalism.

VI.I. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart brought on by the response of the sinner in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace and are evidenced by one's "enduring to the end" in a life of holiness.

VI.II. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. It is deemed authentic when one obeys the commands of God as a consequence.

VI.III. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and the commitment of the entire person to Him as Lord and Savior.

VI.IV. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

VI.V. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

VI.VI. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed in the bodily resurrection of the saints at the end of history.

*Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.*

## **VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper (The Sacraments)**

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

*Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; 6:51-63; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.*

## **VIII. Eschatology**

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to eternal separation from God in Hell (Gr: *géenna*), the place of everlasting punishment, "outer darkness," and "weeping and gnashing of teeth." The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever with the Lord in the new heavens and new earth.

*Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 7:22-23; 8:11-12; 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; 28:19-20; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.*

## **IX. Collegiate and Youth Evangelism**

We affirm the Lord Jesus Christ's commanding of all believers to proclaim the Gospel throughout the world and to disciple people of every nation. The fulfillment of that Great Commission requires that all worldly and personal ambitions be subordinated to a total commitment to "Him who loved us and gave Himself for us."

We further affirm that apologetics (Gr: *apologia*) be employed as a component to and as a subordinate of the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ – particularly in the college age and youth demographics. It is our contention that the Anglo-American world has distanced itself from its primary role and responsibility of proper evangelism and has opted instead for either (i) an overemphasis of personal success and material gain in this life, or (ii) a revision of the doctrines from an emergent Christianity (e.g., "post-conservative evangelicalism"), or both. We find both of these contemporary avenues to be abhorrent and destructive to the fostering of a Christian faith in the college age and youth venues.

*Isaiah 1:18a; Acts 1:3; 17:10-11; 2 Corinthians 11:3-4; Galatians 1:6-9; 1 Thessalonians 5:21; 1 Timothy 4:13; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:16-17; Titus 1:7-9; 1 Peter 3:15; 1 John 4:1-4.*