

STATEMENT OF FAITH

OF THE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP CHURCH OF RHINELAND

THE SCRIPTURES

We believe the Bible is the Word of God, given through verbal, plenary inspiration of the Holy Spirit and is completely without doctrinal, historical or factual error in the original writings (2 Timothy 3:16,17; 2 Peter 1:19-21). We believe the Bible is our supreme and final authority on all matters of faith and conduct (Psalms 119:160; Proverbs 30:5). We also believe that the canon is closed (Hebrews 1:1-3; 2:4; Revelation 22:18-19).

GOD

We believe in the one living and true God, existing eternally in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Genesis 1:1, 26-27; Matthew 28:18-19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 Timothy 2:5). We believe the three Persons are equal in every respect, having the same nature, attributes and perfections, and execute distinct but harmonious offices in the activities of the Godhead (John 10:30; 15:26). The Father is God (Romans 1:7), The Son is God (Hebrews 1:8), The Holy Spirit is God (Acts 5:3-4). They are the divine agents in creation (Genesis 1:2; John 1:1-3).

THE FATHER

We believe in God the Father, the infinite personal spirit who is worthy of all confidence, honour, love and worship (1 Corinthians 8:6; Psalms 145:3; John 4:23-24). He has all the attributes of God. He is self-existent (Exodus 3:14; John 5:26), eternal (1 Timothy 1:17), immutable (Psalms 102:27; Malachi 3:6; James 1:17). He has omnipresence, omnipotence, omniscience (Psalms 139:7-12; Matthew 19:26; Romans 11:33). He is infinitely good, just true, wise and holy (Psalms 145:9; Acts 17:31; Joshua 23:14; Psalms 104:24; 1 Peter 1:16). He is interested in the affairs of men and saves from sin and eternal death all that come to him through Jesus Christ (Genesis 9:12; John 6:44)

JESUS CHRIST

We believe in Jesus Christ, God the Son, the second Person of the Trinity (Matthew 16:16; 26:63-64; 28:19). We believe in his pre-existence (Micah 5:2; John 1:1-14; Colossians 1:16), in his incarnation by the miracle of the virgin birth, being conceived by the Holy Spirit (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:16; Luke 1:30-35) and that he thus became totally man while remaining totally God (Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 2:9; Titus 2:13), one Person with two natures.

We believe that Christ died on the cross for the sins of the world, the perfect sacrifice, being without sin Himself (1 Peter 2:24; 3:18; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15-16). His death was vicarious (substitutionary), expiatory (suffering), propitiatory (appeasing, satisfying) (1 John 2:2; 1 Peter 2:23-24), in order to redeem us, or purchase our salvation (Galatians 3:13; Colossians 1:14; Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 1:18-19). We believe in the resurrection of His glorified body (1 Corinthians 15:3-8), in His bodily ascension into heaven (Acts 1:9-11), and in His present ministry for believers as High Priest, Advocate and Intercessor before God (Romans 8:33-34; Hebrews 4:14-16; 7:25; 1 John 2:1-2).

THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the third person in the Trinity (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14), who came forth from the Father and the Son (John 15:26; Galatians 4:6; Romans 8:9; John 16:7) and who is the divine agent in the inspiration of scriptures (2 Peter 1:20-21) and redemption (John 3:2-5). He convicts the world concerning sin, righteousness and judgement (John 16:8-11). He regenerates (Titus 3:5), baptizes (1 Corinthians 12:13), seals (Ephesians 1:13-14), and indwells the believer for ever (1 Corinthians 6:19; Ephesians 2:22; John 14:16). The Holy Spirit also empowers and fills the believer for service (Acts 1:8; Ephesians 5:18). His ministry is also to guide (Romans 8:14), teach (John 16:13-15; 1 Corinthians 2:9-14) and to lead on to maturity, believers in Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18).

MAN

We believe man was a direct creation of God and made in the image and likeness of the Creator (Genesis 1:26; 9:6). He fell through sin and thereby incurred not only physical death but also that spiritual death which is separation from God (Genesis 2:17). As a result of Adam's disobedience every human since has been born with a sin nature and is totally depraved, unable to help himself spiritually (Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:10-19; 8:6-7; Ephesians 2:1-3). We believe the only hope for mankind in this life and for eternity is the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12).

SIN

We believe that sin is anything contrary to the character of God. It has its origin in Satan (1 John 3:8-10). The sin of Adam was imputed to the human race with the result that all are born with a sin nature leaving man completely without merit in the sight of God. The sin nature remains with a person until death (Romans 5:12-21; 7:24; 1 John 1:8). The only way the sin nature may be subdued is through the believer's yielded life to the power of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:16-26). The believer has access to God through the advocacy of Jesus Christ the Righteous One, by confession of sins (1 John 1:8-2:2).

SALVATION

We believe the only way of salvation for man is through a personal acceptance of Jesus Christ as personal Saviour and trusting in his work on the cross as being sufficient (John 1:12; 2 Corinthians 5:21). He died as our substitute (1 Peter 2:24; 3:18; 1 John 2:2). This salvation is a free gift, totally by the grace of God through faith and can not be merited in whole or in part by any virtue or work of man (Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5). Every individual who accepts Christ is born of the Holy Spirit and thereby becomes a child of God (John 1:12; 3:16). At the moment of believing one becomes a "new creature" (2 Corinthians 5:17) and is moved from death into spiritual life (Romans 6:23; 8:6; Ephesians 2:1, 5; Colossians 1:13; 2:13). In this relationship a believer is eternally secure (John 10:28-29; Philippians 1:6; Romans 5:1; 8:33-39; Hebrews 6:18; 10:10-14).

THE CHURCH

We believe in the universal church, a living spiritual body made up of all believers in Jesus Christ, Jew and Gentile, dead and living, from the day of Pentecost till the return of Jesus Christ to claim His bride (Matthew 16:16-18; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Acts 2:41-47; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17). We believe in the local church, a group of living baptized believers who profess common belief in Jesus Christ and meet regularly for worship, instruction, fellowship, service, evangelism and the practice of the New Testament ordinances, organized as indicated in this constitution (Acts 2:41-47; 14:23; 20:7).

FUTURE EVENTS

We believe in the imminent return of Jesus Christ to take His bride, the church, home to heaven to be with Him forever (1 Corinthians 15:51-57; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 4:13-17). We believe in the premillennial, personal, visible return of Jesus Christ after the tribulation to establish His millennial reign (2 Thessalonians 2:2; Revelation 19-20; Zechariah 12-14; Daniel 7:27). We believe in the resurrection of both the just and the unjust, the everlasting blessedness of the saved and the everlasting conscious punishment of the lost (John 5:25,28-29; Revelation 20:11-15; Romans 2:12; 1 Corinthians 3:11-15).

SATAN

We believe in the existence of the person, Satan, a spirit being; that he was created a high ranking and sinless being; that he fell through pride and became the author of all moral evil (Isaiah 14:12-15). As a result, he is the great adversary of God and every believer (Ephesians 6:12). He is referred to as the God of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4) and the great deceiver (1 Peter 5:8). We believe that he was defeated at the cross of Christ and although he continues to deceive the nations (Revelation 12:9-11; 20:8), his doom is certain and his ultimate end will be the lake of fire (Revelation 20:10).

ANGELS

We believe that angels are personal, spirit beings created by God to be His servants (Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:14). The unfallen angels are those angels who have remained holy throughout their existence and are therefore called "holy angels" (Matthew 25:31). Angels are subject to the authority of Christ (1 Peter 3:22). They care for God's children (Hebrews 1:14; Psalms 91:11-12). The fallen angels make up that innumerable company that fell from their first estate (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6). Their head and leader is Satan (Revelation 20:2; Ephesians 6:11-12) and their final destiny is the eternal lake of fire with Satan (Revelation 20:10; Matthew 25:41).