

First Presbyterian Church, Starkville

Essentials of Our Faith

*"In Essentials, Unity;
In Non-Essentials, Liberty;
In All Things, Charity."*

We believe that the essential tenets of the Reformed Christian faith, as expressed in the Confessions of our church,* are authentic and reliable expositions of what Scripture leads us to believe and to do. What follows is a concise summary of what we, The First Presbyterian Church, Starkville, believe are the essential tenets of our faith as taught in Scripture and summarized in the Confessions. In affirming the essentials of our faith, we also affirm the maxim of our faith that provided wise guidance to 17th century Christians after decades of gospel-impeding religious wars between Christians who actually shared the same essential tenets regarding the sole authority of the Lord and His Word: *"In Essentials, Unity; In Non-Essentials, Liberty; In All Things, Charity."*

Essential Tenets:

1. God – Trinity and Attributes
2. Humanity – Creation and Fall
3. Jesus Christ – Person and Atoning Work
4. Holy Spirit – Person and Sanctifying Work
5. Authority of Scripture – "Scripture Alone"
6. Salvation – by Grace Alone through Faith Alone because of Christ Alone
7. The Church and the Great Commission
8. The Sacraments

* The "Confessions" to which we refer are the historic statements of our Christian faith included in The Book of Confessions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). While we have found helpful a number of resources in articulating the essentials of our faith in the manner and format set forth in this statement, our primary written sources are, first, the Holy Bible, and, second, the expression of our Biblical faith set forth in the Confessions. In the discussion of Essential Tenets that follows, we preface each discussion with citations to key scriptures that guide and are reflected in the discussion. In our discussions of each tenet, we often paraphrase or include language directly from Scripture and/or from the Confessions. Where appropriate, numerical citations to the The Book of Confessions are provided following relevant sentences in the discussion. Citations are given as a group following the discussion of the given Essential Tenet. Finally, we provide an appendix of the scriptural passages cited, with the language provided directly from the Bible.

1. God – Trinity and Attributes

Scripture: Deuteronomy 6:4, Isaiah 45:5, Genesis 1:1, Revelation 4:11, Matthew 28:19, John 1:1-3, 2 Corinthians 13:14, Ephesians 4:4-6, Colossians 1:15-20, 1 Peter 1:2, 1 John 5:6-12

We believe in the one living and true God, Whom alone we must serve, worship, and trust, and Who in His Word has revealed His one Divine Being as three distinct Persons; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (3.01, 4.025, 7.118-19) God is Spirit; infinite in being and perfection, invisible, immutable, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, all-wise, completely holy, completely free, completely loving. (6.011) God is sovereign, working all things in accordance with His unchangeable and righteous will, for His own glory. (6.011) God is compassionate, gracious, merciful and patient. He forgives sin and rewards those who diligently seek Him. (6.011) He is completely just and righteous in His judgments, hating all sin, and will by no means clear the guilty. (6.011) God has all life, glory, and blessedness in and of Himself and is alone all-sufficient, not standing in need of any creatures which He has made. (6.012) He is the creator of all things and has sovereign dominion over them. (6.012) Yet God is not the author of sin and does not violate the will of the creatures. (6.014) We believe in the Trinity; that there is one God Who has eternally existed in three Persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, Who are the same in substance and equal in power and glory. (1.1-1.3, 6.013, 7.006)

We deny any doctrine that denies God's triune nature or refuses to confess the Trinity as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We also deny any deistic assertions that God created the cosmos but is no longer personally involved in its operation or unfolding, or that God is otherwise not sovereign in His engagement with the world.

Confessions: The Nicene Creed (1.1 -1.3), The Heidelberg Catechism (4.025), The Larger Catechism (7.118-19), The Westminster Confession (6.011-6.014), The Scots Confession (3.01, 3.18), The Second Helvetic Confession (5.015-5.019), The Shorter Catechism (7.004-7.006), The Larger Catechism (7.116-7.121)

2. Humanity – Creation and Fall

Scripture: Genesis 1:26-27, Romans 5:18-19, Psalm 51:5, Psalm 143:2, Romans 3:10ff, Ephesians 2:8-9

We believe that God created humanity, male and female, in His own image and likeness, in true righteousness and holiness, so that humans might rightly know God their creator, love Him, and live with Him in eternal blessedness. (4.006) God gave humanity free will and dominion over the creatures. (3.02, 7.010) Because of the disobedience of our first parents, they fell from the state in which they were created and brought sin and death upon themselves and upon all who descended from Adam. (7.013) The fall brought all humanity into a state of sin and misery. (7.017) Human nature became corrupted so that we are altogether unable to do good and wholly inclined to evil. (6.034) Every aspect of our humanity—our personality, intellect, emotions, will, motives—is distorted by sin. (6.032 - 6.035) As a result, human beings are in bondage to sin and subject to God's holy and righteous judgment. (7.019, 7.137 - 7.139) Without God's intervening grace and salvation, all of humanity is lost and condemned. (7.019) We therefore affirm God's Word that none of us is righteous of our own merit under God's law, and we deny the assertion that human nature is basically good. We deny the assertion that human nature is redeemable through good efforts, discipline, or anything else apart from Jesus Christ.

Confessions: The Westminster Confession (6.022-6.023, 6.031-6.036), The Scots Confession (3.02-3.03), The Heidelberg Catechism (4.006-4.008), The Second Helvetic Confession 5.036-5.042). The Shorter Catechism (7.010-7.019), The Larger Catechism (7.127-7.139)

3. Jesus Christ – Person and Atoning Work

Scripture: Romans 3:21-26, Hebrews 2:17,1 John 2:1-2,1 John 4:8-10, Luke 1:31-35, John 14:6, Hebrews 1:1-3,1 Timothy 2:5-6,2 Corinthians 5:19-21, Romans 5:18-19, 1 John 4:2-3, Hebrews 9:11-12, 1 Peter 3:18, Matthew 2:21, Ephesians 1:19-23

We believe in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, fully God and fully human. (1.2, 3.06, 6.044) The eternal Word of God, God's only begotten Son from before all time, became incarnate for our salvation and for the redemption of all creation. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary (1.2; 2.2), and He was without sin. (6.044) Jesus lived a sinless life of perfect righteousness and obedience to God, teaching, performing miracles, ministering as a servant, and declaring that the kingdom of God is at hand. Jesus willingly sacrificed Himself, died on the cross as our substitute and thereby made atonement for our sin. (6.047) His death provided expiation of our sin (covering, putting away, or rubbing out of sin) and propitiation (covering, putting away, or rubbing out of sin and pacifying the wrath of God against us thereby). (6.162, 3.09) In the atonement, our sin and its penalty were imputed to Christ on the cross, and His perfect righteousness is imputed to all who repent of sin and put their trust in Him. We believe in the bodily resurrection of Jesus from the dead as the firstfruits of all those who will be raised with Him, and we believe that He ascended into heaven to the right hand of the Father. (6.046, 3.11) He will come again to earth and will judge all of humanity; the living and the dead. (6.046, 2.2)

We deny any doctrine that discounts or discredits as untrue any portion of the New Testament record concerning Jesus. We affirm that Jesus Christ alone is the Savior of the world; His sacrifice making the way for salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Him alone [see Tenet 6]. We, therefore, deny any doctrine that asserts that there is salvation by any means other than through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. (5.077) We also deny any doctrine that asserts that Christ's atoning work is universally applied to save all persons, regardless of grace through faith and regeneration in the Spirit [see Tenets 5 and 6].

Confessions: The Westminster Confession (6.043-6.050), The Apostles Creed (2.2), The Scots Confession (3.06, 3.09-3.11), The Nicene Creed (1.1-1.3), The Second Helvetic Confession (5.077)

4. Holy Spirit – Person and Sanctifying Work

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 3:17 & 6:17, John 15:26-16:15, Romans 8:1-2, 8:14-17, 18:26-30, 1 Corinthians 1:2; 6:11, Galatians 5:22-25, Philippians 2:12-13, 2 Thessalonians 2:13

We believe in God the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of life (1.3, 2:3) We believe God's Word that the Lord is the Spirit, and the Spirit is the Lord, and whoever is united with the Lord is united in His Spirit. (2 Corinthians 3:17 & 6:17) With and by the Word, the Spirit brings all true conviction and comfort, teaching and transformation – leading to repentance, redemption, and regeneration. (3.12, 5.005, 6.078, 7.185, 7.186) He is at work in the world in innumerable ways but also specifically and personally unites believers and the Church with God our Father and Christ our Lord in Christ's justifying righteousness, sanctifying freedom, and glorious eternal life. (10.4) Therefore, we affirm that, though Christians are marred by sin and imperfection until Christ returns, the Spirit infuses grace in us as believers, testifying in us that we are God's children and bringing substantial manifestations of the righteousness and sanctifying power of God's Kingdom in believers, the Church, and the world. (6.074-77, 7.184, 7.187) The indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in the individual and collective life of believers effects real transformation — a life of increasing holiness, righteousness, power, and love, as we are changed more and more into the image of Christ. The Spirit thereby sanctifies us – connecting us to the holy life of Christ and inspiring us as witnesses of the supernatural and saving power of Christ's life, death, resurrection, and glory. (10.4)

Confessions: The Nicene Creed (1:3), The Apostles' Creed (2:3), The Scots Confession (3.12), The Second Helvetic Confession (5.005), The Westminster Confession of Faith (6.074-6.078), The Shorter Catechism (7.035), The Larger Catechism (7.184-87), A Brief Statement of Faith (10.4)

5. Authority of Scripture – "Scripture Alone"

Scripture: Matthew 4:4, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Luke 24:44-45, Revelation 22:18-19

We believe that the canonical Scriptures, consisting of the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, are the complete, written Word of God, given by the inspiration of God. (3.18-19, 5.001, 6.002) The whole counsel of God and all things necessary for God's glory, human salvation, faith, and life are either expressly set forth in the Scriptures or can be deduced from Scripture through the Spirit under the infallible rule of interpretation: Scripture itself. (6.006, 6.009, 6.010) We affirm that the Holy Spirit illumines our minds to understand the Scriptures, and we deny any doctrine that asserts that there can be revelations from the Holy Spirit that contradict or supersede Scripture. (6.010) We therefore affirm the authority of "Scripture alone" ("sola scriptura") in all things – in accord with "Christ alone" as the Word of God incarnate and in accord with the illumination of the Spirit. We deny any doctrine that elevates the authority of human scholarship or reason, or the authority of church councils, above the authority of Scripture. We deny any doctrine that seeks to follow a "Jesus Christ" or "gospel" apart from the person, work and will of Jesus Christ revealed in Scripture.

Confessions: The Westminster Confession (6.002 - 6.010), The Scots Confession (3.18-3.20), The Second Helvetic Confession (5.001-5.002, 5.010, 5.013, 5.080), The Theological Declaration of Barmen (8.04)

6. Salvation – by Grace Alone through Faith Alone because of Christ Alone

Scripture: John 3:16-17 & 14:6, Ephesians 2:8-9, Romans 3:19-23, Romans 5:1, Galatians 2:16, Acts 4:12, Hebrews 5:8-9, Romans 12:2, Philippians 2:14-16

We believe that in the gospel of Jesus Christ, God declares His love for the world and reveals fully and clearly the only way of salvation: Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and we are saved by “grace alone” through “faith alone” in “Christ alone.” (6.056) He promises eternal life to all who truly repent and believe in Christ, and He invites and commands all to embrace the offered mercy. (6.056) As soon as the Holy Spirit regenerates people by His grace, He convicts them of sin, moves them to repentance, and persuades and enables them to embrace Jesus Christ by faith. (6.053) Justification is an act of God's free grace in which He pardons all our sins and accepts us as righteous in His sight only because of the righteousness of Christ imputed to us and received by faith alone. (7.033) Justification does not come through any of our works. (5.109) We cannot by our best works merit pardon for sin or eternal life. (6.091) Even our best works in this life are all imperfect and defiled with sin. (4.062)

The Holy Spirit unites all believers to Christ and dwells in them as their Comforter and Sanctifier. (6.053) Sanctification is the work of God's free grace whereby we are renewed in the whole person after the image of God and are enabled more and more to die to sin and live to righteousness. (7.036) In justification, sin is pardoned; in sanctification, it is subdued. (7.187) As soon as the Holy Spirit takes possession of the heart of any person, there begins a continual battle between the flesh and the Spirit in God's children, who fight against sin. (3.13) In time, God's people are redeemed, called, justified, sanctified and glorified. (6.043)

Confessions: The Westminster Confession (6.043, 6.053, 6.055-6.056, 6.091), The Scots Confession (3.12-3.13), The Heidelberg Catechism (4.062), The Second Helvetic Confession (5.109), The Shorter Catechism (7.033-7.036), The Larger Catechism (7.187)

7. The Church and The Great Commission

Scripture: Ephesians 1:4-7, Ephesians 1:11-12, Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 1:6-8, 2 Corinthians 5:18-20, John 15:5,8,16, Ephesians 2:10, 1 Peter 2:9-12, Galatians 3:28, Titus 2:14, Romans 12:1, Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:8, Psalm 82:3-4, 2 Peter 3:10-13, Matthew 25:34-40, Luke 10:36-37

We believe that the “catholic” (i.e. universal) Church, which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ the Head, and that He sends His visible Church, which is also catholic (universal), in the Great Commission as witness to His gospel of reconciliation, to make disciples of all nations. (6.058, 6.140, 6.141, 9.31, 10.4) The visible Church consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, together with their children. (6.141) By the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, all believers, being vitally united to Christ Who is the Head, are thus united to one another in the Church, which is His body. (6.053-6.054) The Church is the temple of the living God, the bride of Christ, and the body of Christ. (5.130) True churches are distinguished by three marks: the true preaching of the Word of God, the right administration of the sacraments of Christ, and church discipline uprightly administered, as God's Word prescribes. (3.18) To the visible Church, Christ has given the ministry and ordinances of God, for the gathering and perfecting of the saints. (6.142) Since there is no other way of salvation than that revealed in the gospel, Christ has commissioned His Church to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations. (6.058) All believers are, therefore, to contribute by their prayers, gifts, and personal efforts to the extension of the Kingdom of Christ throughout the whole earth. (6.058)

Confessions: The Westminster Confession (6.053-6.054, 6.058, 6.140-6.142), The Scots Confession (3.18), The Second Helvetic Confession (5.130)

8. The Sacraments

Scripture: Matthew 28:18-20, Romans 6:3-4, John 3:3-8, 1 Peter 3:21-22, 1 Corinthians 12:13, Luke 22:17-20, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, 1 Corinthians 10:16

We believe that the sacraments of the New Testament we have received from the Lord Jesus are Baptism and the Lord's Supper and that they are holy signs and seals of the covenant of grace immediately instituted by God to represent Christ and His benefits. (6.149, 7.093) The sacraments are not merely symbols. (3.21) Instead, there is a spiritual relation or sacramental union between the sign and the thing signified. (6.150). God, Who is alone the Author of the sacraments, instituted the sacraments not only to make a visible distinction between His people and those who were outside the Covenant, but also to seal in the hearts of His children the assurance of His promise and of the most blessed union and fellowship which the chosen have with their Head, Jesus Christ. (3.21, 5.172)

Under the Great Commission and Christ's other teaching and commands, the sacrament of Baptism – the washing with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit – is a sign and seal of our ingrafting into Christ, the remission of our sins, and our death to self and regeneration in Jesus Christ to walk in newness of life. (7.094, 6.154) Unbaptized adults coming to faith are baptized as a sign of the New Covenant under which they are to be incorporated into the Christian Church; the baptism also of children of believers is an affirmation of God's covenant grace and of the Good News that His grace reaches us even before we are able fully to respond in faith. Under the Old Covenant, circumcision was the outward sign and seal for male children in covenant households; under the New Covenant, baptism has been instituted to take the place of circumcision as an outward sign and seal of belonging to God under the covenant. (4.074)

Our Lord Jesus, on the night on which he was betrayed, instituted the sacrament of His body and blood called the Lord's Supper, to be observed in His Church to the end of the world for the perpetual remembrance of the sacrifice of Himself in His death, the sealing of all benefits of that to true believers, their spiritual nourishment and growth in Him, their further engagement in and to all duties which they owe to Him, and to be a bond and pledge of their communion with Him, and with each other, as members of His mystical body. (6.161) Worthy receivers, outwardly partaking of the visible elements of bread and wine in this sacrament do then also inwardly, by faith, really and indeed, yet not carnally and corporally, but spiritually, receive and feed upon Christ crucified, really and spiritually present to the faith of believers as the elements themselves are to their outward senses. (6.167)

Confessions: The Westminster Confession (6.149-6.150, 6.154, 6.161, 6.167), The Shorter Catechism (7.093-7.094), The Scots Confession (3.21), The Second Helvetic Confession (5.172), The Heidelberg Catechism (4.074)

Soli Deo Gloria!

Appendix of Scripture Cited in First Presbyterian Church, Starkville, Essentials of Our Faith.

All quotations are from New International Version translation of the Holy Bible, except where the parenthetical abbreviation “(NASB)” follows the passage

1. God – Trinity and Attributes

Deuteronomy 6:4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.

Isaiah 45:5 I am the LORD, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God...

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth

Revelation 4:11 You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.

Matthew 28:19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

John 1:1-3 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

2 Corinthians 13:14 May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Ephesians 4:4-6 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Colossians 1:15-20 15 The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

1 Peter 1:2 ... who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to be obedient to Jesus Christ and sprinkled with his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance.

1 John 5:6-12 This is the one who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. For there are three that testify: the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement. We accept human testimony, but God’s testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son. Whoever believes in the Son of God accepts this testimony. Whoever does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because they have not believed the testimony God has given about his Son. And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

2. Humanity – Creation and Fall

Genesis 1:26-27 Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

Romans 5:18-19 18 Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. 19 For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

Psalms 51:5 Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

Psalms 143:2 Do not bring your servant into judgment, for no one living is righteous before you.

Romans 3:10 As it is written: “There is no one righteous, not even one....”

Ephesians 2:8-9 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast.

3. Jesus Christ – Person and Atoning Work

Romans 3:21-26 But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; for all

have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. (NASB)

Hebrews 2:17 Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. (New American SB)

1 John 2:1-2 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; 2 and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world. (NASB)

1 John 4:8-10 The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. (NASB)

Luke 1:31-35 You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

"How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.

John 14:6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Hebrews 1:1-3 1 In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. 3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

Timothy 2:5-6 For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all people. This has now been witnessed to at the proper time.

Corinthians 5:19-21 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. 21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God

Romans 5:18-19 18 Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. 19 For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

1 John 4:2-3 2 This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, 3 but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.

Hebrews 9:11-12 11 But when Christ came as high priest of the good things that are now already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not made with human hands, that is to say, is not a part of this creation. 12 He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption.

1 Peter 3:18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit.

Matthew 2:21 She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

Ephesians 1:19-23 and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength 20 he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, 21 far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. 22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

4. The Holy Spirit – Person and Sanctifying Work

2 Corinthians 3:17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

2 Corinthians 6:17 But whoever is united with the Lord is one with him in spirit.

John 15:26-16:15 "When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me. And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning. All this I have told you so that you will not fall away. They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, the time is coming when anyone who kills you will think they are offering a service to God. They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me. I have told you this, so that when their time comes you will remember that I warned you about them. I did not tell you this from the beginning because I was with you, 5 but now I am going to him who sent me. None of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' Rather, you are filled with grief because I have said these things. But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: about sin, because people do not believe in me; about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned. "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will glorify me because it

is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you."

Romans 8:1-2, 14-17, 26-30 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God. And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

1 Corinthians 1:2, 6:11 To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be his holy people, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—their Lord and ours. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

Galatians 5:22-25 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

Philippians 2:12-13 Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers and sisters loved by the Lord, because God chose you as firstfruits to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.

5. Authority of Scripture – "Scripture alone"

Matthew 4:4 Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work

Luke 24:44-45 He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms." 45 Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.

6. Salvation – by Grace Alone through Faith Alone because of Christ Alone

Romans 3:19-23 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin. But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 5:1 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Galatians 2:16 know that a person is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no one will be justified.

Ephesians 2:8-9 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 14:6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Acts 4:12 Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."

Hebrews 5:8-9 Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him

Romans 12:2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will

Philippians 2:14-16 Do everything without grumbling or arguing, IS so that you may become blameless and pure, "children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation." Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky 16 as you hold firmly to the word of life...

7. The Church & the Great Commission

Ephesians 1:4-7 For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight In love 5 he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. 7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace

Ephesians 1:11-12 In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, 12 in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory

John 15:5, 8,16 I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing...This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.... You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you

Ephesians 2:10 For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do

1 Peter 2:9-12 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

Galatians 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Titus 2:14 [W]ho gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

Romans 12:1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.

Matthew 28:18-20 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Psalms 82:3-4 Defend the weak and the fatherless; uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.

2 Peter 3:10-13 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar, the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.

Matthew 25:34-40 "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38 When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

Luke 10:36-37 "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

8. The Sacraments

Matthew 28:18-20 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Romans 6:3-4 Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life

1 Corinthians 12:13 For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

1 Corinthians 11:23-26 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." 26 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

1 Corinthians 10:16 Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?

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