

WHAT WE BELIEVE

A study of the PBCC Doctrinal Statement

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PBCC DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

The Board of Elders at PBC Cupertino has adopted the following doctrinal statement:

Concerning the Bible:

The original writings of both Old and New Testaments were inspired by God by means of the Holy Spirit, who chose the words employed. These writings were without error and are of supreme and final authority in the lives of believers in any age. The Bible says everything God intended to say to mankind regarding redemption.

[1 Cor 2:12-13; 2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Pet 1:20-21]

Concerning God:

There is but one true God, who eternally exists as three distinct persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who share in the work of creation, maintenance of the universe, sovereign control of history, redemption of believers and judgment of angels and mankind.

[Gen 1:1; Isa 40:15-17, 22-24; Matt 3:16-17; John 1:1-3; 1 Cor 12:4-6; Eph 4:4-6; Col 1:15-20]

The Father

God the Father is unique in nature. He is eternal, having no beginning or end. He is the Father of Jesus Christ whom He sent in bodily form. He is our Creator by virtue of our physical creation, and becomes our spiritual Father by election and adoption. He created mankind for the express purpose of fellowship with us as His children, to the praise of his Glory.

[Gen 1:1; Ps 102:12,25; 139:13-14; Acts 17:29; Eph 1:3-6]

The Son

By miracle of the virgin birth, the Lord Jesus Christ, eternal Son of God, became man without ceasing to be God in order to reveal God and to redeem man. Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah. He is the means of Creation, and the visible expression of the invisible God. No man comes to reconciliation with God the Father except through Jesus Christ.

[Isa 7:14; Matt 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-35; 2:7-12; 4:17-21; 24:25-27; John 1:1-2; 3:16; 14:6-12; Phil 2:5-12; Col 1:15-20; Heb 1:1-2]

The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is God, sent by the resurrected Jesus to reveal and glorify Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit living in the believer is the proof guaranteeing our inheritance in Jesus Christ. He provides spiritual gifts to all believers, and indwells, guides, teaches, empowers and comforts them. He convicts the world concerning sin, righteousness and judgment.

[John 14:16-17; 16:5-16; Acts 2:1-4,16-21; Rom 8:26-27; 1 Cor 2:12-16; Eph 1:13-14]

Concerning Man and his need:

Man was created in the image of God and is loved by Him, but, through an inherited sinful nature and his own choice, is alienated, separated from God. In this condition, man is enslaved to the world, the flesh and the devil, and is under God's present wrath and ultimate righteous judgment.

[Gen 1:26-27; 3:1-7; Rom 1:18-21; 2:5-6; 3:23; 5:12-21; 6:23; Eph 2:1-3]

Concerning Redemption - God's Solution to Man's Need:

Jesus Christ, who lived a sinless life on earth, voluntarily gave his life as a sacrifice for all the sins of mankind, was buried and rose bodily from the dead, and ascended to the right hand of the Father as Lord. He uniquely satisfied the just requirement of God for death as the penalty for sin. All who believe in Him are forever reconciled to God solely through Jesus' death on the cross. Everyone who is called into this relationship by God is granted every spiritual blessing that is in Christ, and will be perfected with Him. Nothing can separate the believer from the love of Christ.

[Luke 23:46; John 19:30; Acts 2:32-36; Rom 3:21-26; 8:29-39; 10:8-11; Eph 1:3-12; Phil 1:6; 1 John 2:2]

Concerning Man's Response to God:

Every person has the opportunity and the obligation to respond to God. All response to Him is initiated by God as he draws people to Himself. Those who repent of their sinfulness, and trusting in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ as full payment for their sin, receive Him as Lord and Savior, are forever reconciled to God the Father, and become a new creation in Jesus Christ.

[John 1:9-13; 3:16; 6:44; Acts 13:48; Rom 1:18-20; 10:8-9; Eph 2:8-9; 2 Cor 4:6; 1 John 5:11-13]

Concerning the Christian's Responsibility:

The Christian life is a transformation, in which Christ Himself lives His life through the believer. All believers are still capable of responding to the urges of the flesh, and when they do so they do not please God. They can choose, rather, to rely continually upon the indwelling Holy Spirit's power and love, and thus glorify and please the Father. Believers are to be baptized by water symbolizing their full participation in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

[Acts 2:37-39; Rom 6:15-18; 8:1-17; 12:1-2; 2 Cor 3:5-6,18; 5:17; Eph 2:10; 5:3-10]

Concerning the Church:

The Church is the body of Christ on earth, and consists of all who have been regenerated by God. This body finds expression as local churches, operating under the direction of Jesus Christ as Lord and Head of His body, through elders, pastor-teachers, and evangelists, who equip the saints for the work of the ministry. All believers are responsible to utilize their spiritual gifts for the common good. All believers are His witnesses in the world and are to further the task of making disciples of all nations. All believers are to remember the sacrifice of the Lord on their behalf by observing the Lord's Supper until His return.

[Matt 28:18-20; Rom 5:10; 8:16-17; 12:3-8; 1 Cor 11:23-34; 12; Eph 4:11-12; 1 Pet 2:4-5, 9-10; 4:10-11]

Concerning the Future:

There will be the imminent, bodily and visible return of Jesus Christ to this earth to bring to completion His kingdom, to judge the world in righteousness, to fulfill His prophetic promises to Israel and to the rest of mankind concerning the future, and to create a new heaven and a new earth. All people who have died will be raised from the dead, and those who have been redeemed will participate in eternal life in the presence of God, but those who have rejected Christ will suffer eternal punishment and separation from God.

[Matt 25:31-34, 41; 1 Cor 15:22-26, 40-44, 50-58; 1 Thess 5:1-11; 2 Thess 2:1-12; Rev 3:5; 20:12; 21:1-22:5]

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INTRODUCTION

I. BIBLICAL CREEDS

A. OLD TESTAMENT

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. (Deut 6:4)

B. NEW TESTAMENT

if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (Rom 10:9)

Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says “Jesus is accursed!” and no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except in the Holy Spirit. (1 Cor 12:3)

³concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord. (Rom 1:3-4)

³For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁴that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. (1 Cor 15:3-4)

²By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, ³and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already. (1 John 4:2-3)

[Christ Jesus] ⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Phil 2:6-11)

yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist. (1 Cor 8:6)

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. (Matt 28:19)

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. (2 Cor 13:14)

Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness:

He was manifested in the flesh,
vindicated by the Spirit,
seen by angels,
proclaimed among the nations,
believed on in the world,
taken up in glory. (1 Tim 3:16)

II. THE ECUMENICAL CREEDS

A. THE APOSTLES' CREED

Based on the Old Roman Creed, 2d cent.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

B. THE NICENE CREED*Council of Constantinople, 381*

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made.

Who, for us men and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again, with glory, to judge the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life; who proceeds from the Father [and the Son]; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets.

And I believe one holy catholic and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

* “and the Son” (Lat. *filioque*) was added later by the Western Church. The Eastern (Orthodox) Church does not recognize this addition.

C. THE CHALCEDONIAN DEFINITION*Council of Chalcedon, 451*

Therefore, following the holy Fathers, we all with one accord teach men to acknowledge one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, at once complete in Godhead and complete in manhood, truly God and truly man, consisting also of a reasonable soul and body; of one substance (*homoousios*) with the Father as regards his Godhead, and at the same time of one substance with us as regards his manhood; like us in all respects, apart from sin; as regards his Godhead, begotten of the Father before the ages, but yet as regards his manhood begotten, for us men and for our salvation, of Mary the Virgin, the God-bearer (*theotokos*); one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only-begotten, recognized in two natures, without confusion, without change, without division, without separation; the distinction of natures being in no way annulled by the union, but rather the characteristics of each nature being preserved and coming together to form one person and subsistence (*hypostasis*), not as parted or separated into two persons, but one and the same Son and Only-begotten God the Word, Lord Jesus Christ; even as the prophets from earliest times spoke of him, and our Lord Jesus Christ himself taught us, and the creed of the Fathers has handed down to us.

III. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF CREEDS

c. 140 Old Roman Creed, a baptismal creed using in Rome. Develops into the Apostles’ Creed (first found in its current form ca. 750)

A. THE ECUMENICAL COUNCILS (325-787)

- 325 Council of Nicea issued the original Nicene creed, rejecting Arianism (Christ is a created being), and affirming that Christ is fully divine, one in being (*homoousios*) with the Father.
- 381 Council of Constantinople issued the Constantinopolitan Creed, later called the Nicene Creed, affirming that the Spirit is divine.
- 431 Council of Ephesus condemned Nestorianism (Christ has two separable natures), and declared Mary *theotokos* (God-bearer, i.e. Mother of God).
- 451 Council of Chalcedon issued the Definition of Chalcedon, affirming that Christ has two natures in one person.
- 553 Council of Constantinople II condemned the Three Chapters (a compendium of the writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoret of Cyrus, and Ibas of Edessa, advocates of Antiochene theology emphasizing Christ’s humanity at the expense of his deity.)
- 680 Council of Constantinople III condemned monothelitism (Christ has a single will), affirming that Christ possessed a human will and a divine will that function in perfect moral harmony.

Introduction

787 Council of Nicea II declared that icons and other symbols are acceptable aids to worship and devotion, rejecting the iconoclasts (icon-smashers).

B. THE SPLIT BETWEEN EAST AND WEST

867 Patriarch of Constantinople declared Rome heretical for adding *filioque* (and the Son) to Nicene Creed

1054 Pope Leo IX excommunicated Patriarch of Constantinople (head of Eastern Church); a few days later Patriarch excommunicated papal legates.

C. THE REFORMATION AND THE PROTESTANT CHURCH

1517 Luther nailed 95 theses to door of castle church in Wittenberg.

1521 Diet of Worms: "Here I stand, I can do no other." Luther reluctantly was forced to separate from the Catholic Church, starting the German Reformation.

German Reformation: Augsburg Confession (1530), Heidelberg Catechism (1563).

Swiss Reformation: First (1536) and Second (1566) Helvetic Confessions, Genevan Confession (1536).

English Reformation: Thirty-nine Articles of Religion (1562).

1618-19 Synod of Dordt issued its canons (total depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace, total depravity) in response to the teaching of Jacob Arminius.

1644-48 Westminster Assembly of Divines issued the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, the *Larger Catechism* and the *Shorter Catechism* (collectively known as the Westminster Standards). The Presbyterian *WCF* was modified for Baptist purposes as the Second London Baptist Confession (1689).

D. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

1545-63 Council of Trent: Roman Catholic's response to the Reformation (Counter-Reformation). Declared inspiration of apocrypha, traditions; sole validity of Church-authorized interpretation of Bible; baptismal regeneration; purgatory; Pope as vicar upon earth of God and Christ. Reaffirmed transubstantiation, reservation of sacrament. Denied salvation by faith alone; priesthood of all believers.

1869-70 First Vatican Council: affirmed papal infallibility, part of the expanding dogma of Catholic Church: Immaculate conception of Mary (1854), Papal infallibility (1870), Bodily assumption of Mary (1950).

1965 Second Vatican Council: permitted vernacular in worship.

IV. DOCTRINAL STANDARDS OF CHURCHES

In addition to the ecumenical creeds (Apostles' Creed, Nicene Creed, Chalcedonian Definition) recognized by the whole Church, different denominations affirm different credal standards.

A. PROTESTANT

Anglican: (Thirty-nine) Articles of Religion (1562)

Baptist: with the exception of Reformed Baptists, Baptists generally eschew doctrinal statements.

- **Reformed Baptist:** Second London Baptist Confession (1689)

Lutheran: Book of Concord containing the Augsburg Confession (1530) and others.

Methodist:

Presbyterian: the primary standard for Presbyterian churches is the Westminster Standards, consisting of the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Shorter Catechism, and the Larger Catechism, all issued by the Westminster Assembly of Divines (1644-48).

- **Presbyterian Church (USA) (PCUSA):** acknowledges ten confessional statements as contained in the *Book of Confessions* consisting of the Nicene Creed, Apostles' Creed, Scots Confession, Heidelberg Catechism, Second Helvetic Confession, Westminster Confession of Faith, Shorter Catechism, Longer Catechism, Theological Declaration of Barmen, Confession of 1967.
- **Presbyterian Church in America (PCA):** Westminster Standards (Confession of Faith, Shorter and Larger Catechisms).
- **Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC):** Westminster Standards (Confession of Faith, Shorter and Larger Catechisms).

Reformed: any or all of the following Reformed creeds: Belgic Confession (1561), Canons of Dort (1618-19), Heidelberg Catechism (1563), Westminster Standards (1648), Savoy Declaration of Faith and Order (1658).

Non-denominational:

- write their own statements (PBC, PBCC)
- use a generic evangelical statement, e.g. IVF (Inter-Varsity Fellowship) Doctrinal Basis.
- use no standard, because “Scripture is sufficient”

B. CATHOLIC

- Ancient creeds (Apostles’, Nicene, Athanasian), Chalcedonian Definition.
- Expanding dogma consisting of *ex cathedra* pronouncements by the Pope.
- Catechism of the Catholic Church (1994)

C. ORTHODOX

- Ancient creeds (Apostles’, Nicene—rejects Athanasian), Chalcedonian Definition.

The Apostles’ Creed

I believe in God the Father,
 Maker of the heaven and earth,
 And in Jesus Christ, our Savior,
 God’s own Son of matchless worth;
 Laid aside His heavenly glory,
 By the Holy Ghost conceived,
 Born unto the Virgin Mary,
 He in whom I have believed.

At God’s right hand He is seated,
 Till His coming as He said,
 Final judgment will be meted
 To the living and the dead,
 I confess the Holy Spirit
 Has been sent through Christ the Son,
 To apply salvation’s merit,
 God Almighty, Three in One.

Suffered under Pontius Pilate,
 Crucified for me He died;
 Laid within the grave so silent,
 Gates of hell He opened wide.
 And the stone-sealed tomb was empty,
 On the third day He arose,
 Into heaven made His entry,
 Mighty conqueror of His foes.

I believe the Church of Jesus
 Forms one body as a whole,
 All are one throughout the ages,
 With the saints I lift my soul.
 I believe sins are forgiven,
 That our bodies will be raised;
 Everlasting life in heaven,
 May God’s holy name be praised.

author unknown.

CONCERNING THE BIBLE

A. PBCC STATEMENT

The original writings of both Old and New Testaments were inspired by God by means of the Holy Spirit, who chose the words employed. These writings were without error and are of supreme and final authority in the lives of believers in any age. The Bible says everything God intended to say to mankind regarding redemption.

[1 Cor 2:12-13; 2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Pet 1:20-21]

¹²Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. ¹³And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. (1 Cor 2:12-13)

¹⁶All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work. (2 Tim 3:16-17)

²⁰knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. ²¹For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. (2 Pet 1:20-21)

I. THE CANON

Scripture (Lat. *scriptura*, Gk *graphē*, a writing), the Bible (Gk *biblia*, books), is understood to be the Word of God. The Bible is canonical (Gk *kanōn*, rule, measure, standard), recognized as authoritative by God's people. Jews recognize one canon, the Hebrew Bible. Christians recognize two canons, Old Testament and New Testament. The OT canon was inherited from the Jews. The NT canon was decided by the Church. In both cases, the community of faith considered that it was merely formalizing the canon given it by God.

A. THE OLD TESTAMENT CANON

The Jewish canon is *Tanakh*, acronym of the three components: *Torah* (Law, Instruction), *Nevi'im* (Prophets), *Ketuvim* (Writings). It contains 24 books (the Book of the Twelve is considered one book. The *Megillot* are considered five separate books).

Law (<i>Torah</i>)	Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy	
Prophets (<i>Nevi'im</i>)	Former Prophets:	Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings
	Latter Prophets:	Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel
	The Book of the Twelve: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi	
Writings (<i>Ketuvim</i>)	Psalms, Job, Proverbs,	
	<i>Megillot</i> /Scrolls:	Ruth, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations, Esther, Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah, Chronicles

The canon was fixed mid-2nd century BC.

The English Bible follows the arrangement of the Septuagint:

- 39 books (The Twelve as 12 separate books; Samuel, Kings, Chronicles divided into two; Ezra-Nehemiah split into two).
- Ruth, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Chronicles moved for a better historical sequence.

B. THE NEW TESTAMENT CANON

27 books:

1. 4 gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
2. Acts of the Apostles
3. 21 Letters: 13 Pauline Epistles: Romans, 1, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1+2 Thessalonians, Philemon
3 Pastoral Epistles: 1, 2 Timothy, Titus
Hebrews
6 General/Catholic Epistles: James, 1, 2 Peter, 1, 2, 3 John, Jude
4. Revelation

Peter considered Paul's letters to be in the same category as "the other Scriptures" (2 Pet 3:15-16).

The need for the Church to define the NT canon was hastened by Marcion, ca. 140, who rejected the OT and much of the NT because it was "Jewish."

Diatessaron, a harmony of the four gospels made by Tatian ca. 170, shows that the church accepted these four gospels as equal, while rejecting all others.

Muratorian Canon, ca. 170 or 300: omits Hebrews, James, 1 + 2 Peter, 3 John.

Eusebius, Church History: Universally recognized: 4 Gospels, Acts, Letters of Paul (including Hebrews), 1 Pet, 1 John, Rev. Admitted by majority: James, 2 Peter, 2 + 3 John, Jude.

Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, in his Easter Letter, 367, lists 27 books.

Council of Carthage (397) defined 27 books as the canonical Scriptures.

C. THE APOCRYPHA

Gk *apokryphos*. < *apo-* away + *kryptō* hide.

Tobit, Judith, Additions to the Book of Esther, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus (Sirach), Baruch, Letter of Jeremiah, Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Jews, Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, 1, 2 Maccabees, 1 Esdras, Prayer of Manasseh, 2 Esdras

Included in the Septuagint, except 2 Esdras, but never included in Hebrew canon.

Included in Old Latin translations (based on LXX), including 2 Esdras; hence used by Church Fathers.

In preparing the Vulgate, Jerome used Hebrew texts and classified Apocrypha as secondary.

Augustine considered Apocrypha of equal authority to Scripture.

Council of Trent (1546) decreed Apocrypha to be canonical, except Prayer of Manasseh, 1, 2 Esdras.

Catholic Church recognizes two categories of canonical books:

- protocanonical: books recognized as canonical from the beginning
- deuterocanonical: books later recognized as canonical

The Protestant Church has never accepted the Apocrypha, while often printing it between OT and NT.

The books commonly called Apocrypha, not being of divine inspiration, are no part of the canon of Scripture, and therefore are of no authority in the Church of God, nor to be any otherwise approved, or made us of, than other human writings. (WCF 1.3)

The Protestant Canon	OT + NT
The Catholic Canon	OT + NT + 12 Deuterocanonical Books
The Orthodox Canon	OT + NT + 12 Deuterocanonical Books + all or some of 1, 2 Esdras, Psalm 151, Prayer of Manasseh, 3 Maccabees

II. THE TEXT

A. THE OT TEXT

The Hebrew Bible/OT is written in Hebrew except for three sections written in Aramaic (Dan 2:4b–7:28; Ezra 4:8–6:18; 7:12–26). The consonantal text (proto-MT) was fixed ca. AD 100.

1. The Masoretic Text (MT)

After the fixing of the text, scribes took great care to ensure the exact text was copied. To facilitate this they added to the text a *masorah* (marginal notes and end notes) and pointing (vowel signs, accent signs). The consonantal text is sacred, but not the *masorah* and the pointing. The scribes who did this work are called the Masoretic scribes, and the resultant text is the Masoretic Text (MT). The original consonantal text presumed to lie behind MT is called the proto-MT. The most famous of these scribes was Aaron ben Moses ben-Asher (fl. 930), last of a famous line of scribes in Tiberias. There are three important versions of the Masoretic Text:

Bomberg Bible (1525): the Second Rabbinic Bible, edited by Jacob ben Hayyim, printed by Daniel Bomberg in Venice in 1525. After centuries of copying, the MT was finally printed and hence stabilized, but numerous errors had crept in over 600 years. This was the basis for all subsequent Hebrew Bibles; it became the “received text” of the Jewish community.

Leningradensis (ℵ): completed in 1009 in Egypt, currently in the Public Library of St Petersburg. The scribe added a colophon:

Samuel ben Jacob wrote out the consonants, vowels, punctuation, accents, and annotations of this codex of Scripture from the texts checked and corrected by the late master Aaron ben Moses Ben-Asher; it has been checked and corrected per tradition.

In 1937 ℵ was the basis for a new edition of the Hebrew Bible (BHK *Biblia Hebraica*, ed. Kittel, 1937), and for current standard Hebrew Bible (BHS *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, published by the German Bible Society, Stuttgart, 1977).

Aleppo Codex: ca. 935. Consonants written by one scribe; pointing and *masorah* added by Aaron ben Asher. A quarter of the MS was destroyed by fire during anti-Jewish riots in Aleppo, Syria in 1947. The MS is now at Hebrew University, Jerusalem, which is publishing an exact replica (HUBP Hebrew University Bible Project).

2. The Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS)

The first scroll was discovered in a cave at Qumran, by the Dead Sea, in 1947. Many MSS have been recovered from about a dozen caves. The MSS date to 150 BC – AD 50. They include every book except Esther. They show that the MT is remarkably accurate.

3. Septuagint (LXX)

A translation into Greek made in Alexandria, 250–150 BC. Tradition says it was done by 72 translators.

The oldest surviving codices are Vaticanus (4th cent), Sinaiticus (4th cent), Alexandrinus (5th cent), all Greek Bibles of OT + NT.

B. THE NT TEXT

For 1000 years the Western Church used the Vulgate, Jerome's translation of the Bible. Knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek texts disappeared.

Erasmus: compiled a Greek NT from a half-dozen late Byzantine texts, printed ca. 1525.

Textus Receptus (TR, Received Text), used for translation, including the English translations of the 16th century, later standardized into the KJV.

Westcott & Hort: *The New Testament in the Original Greek* (1881), argued that early MSS more closely approximated the original text than did TR.

Three important early near-complete MSS of NT:

- **Vaticanus** (mid-4th cent): entire OT, most of NT (missing Pastoral Epistles, Heb 9:15-Rev). In the Vatican Library but only made available for study in mid-19th century.
- **Sinaiticus** (mid-4th cent): most of OT, entire NT. Discovered by Tischendorf at St Catherine's Monastery, Mt Sinai, 1844, 1853; donated to Czar 1859; bought by British Museum from Soviet Union in 1933.
- **Alexandrinus** (early 5th cent): entire NT. Donated by Patriarch in Constantinople to King of England 1627, donated to British Museum 1757.

Since Westcott-Hort, many other fragments have been discovered.

p52 (ca. 125): papyrus fragment containing a few verses of John 18. Discovered in Egypt, acquired by John Rylands Library, Manchester, 1920. The earliest fragment of the NT

The Greek NT used today by scholars is an eclectic text, compiled from numerous MSS. There are two versions: Nestle-Aland (27th ed, NA²⁷), United Bible Society (4th ed, UBS4), which now have identical texts.

III. THE AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE

- **inspiration:** the qualification for canonicity is recognition by the community of faith that a book is God's word, inspired by him. The idea of inspiration comes from 2 Tim 3:16: "All Scripture is breathed out by God (*theopneustos*)."
 - verbal/plenary inspiration: the full (plenary) inspiration of every word of Scripture, not just that God inspired the authors who then wrote down human words.
- **infallibility:** Scripture is fully trustworthy
- **inerrancy:** Scripture is without error in any respect, including history, science, geography, etc. Affirmed by Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy (International Council on Biblical Inerrancy).

A. IS SCRIPTURE THE SOLE AUTHORITY?

- Catholic: Scripture as officially interpreted by the Church (*magisterium*).
- Protestant: the Reformers returned *ad fontem* (to the source), returning to Scripture alone. They affirmed *sola Scriptura* (Scripture alone). Technically the confessions are human approximations to divine Scripture, and therefore are secondary.

1. The Status of Tradition

- Orthodox:
- Catholic:
- Protestant:

B. ATTITUDES TO SCRIPTURE

Bruce Waltke classifies five attitudes to Scripture:

Concerning the Bible

1. Classical liberalism: *above* Scripture. Using reason to decide what is true. Confidence in human reason.
2. Post-liberalism: *before* Scripture. What does it mean to me. Confidence in my response.
3. Confessionalism: Scripture must match the confession. Confidence in the confession.
4. Fundamentalism: *upon* Scripture. Convinced one knows what Scripture says. Confidence in my understanding.
5. Evangelicalism: *under* Scripture. Allowing the text to speak. Confidence in the text.

CONCERNING GOD

A. PBCC STATEMENT

There is but one true God, who eternally exists as three distinct persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who share in the work of creation, maintenance of the universe, sovereign control of history, redemption of believers and judgment of angels and mankind.

[Gen 1:1; Isa 40:15-17, 22-24; Matt 3:16-17; John 1:1-3; 1 Cor 12:4-6; Eph 4:4-6; Col 1:15-20]

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. (Gen 1:1)

¹⁵ Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket,
and are accounted as the dust on the scales;
behold, he takes up the coastlands like fine dust.

¹⁶ Lebanon would not suffice for fuel,
nor are its beasts enough for a burnt offering.

¹⁷ All the nations are as nothing before him,
they are accounted by him as less than nothing and emptiness...

²² It is he who sits above the circle of the earth,
and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers;
who stretches out the heavens like a curtain,
and spreads them like a tent to dwell in;

²³ who brings princes to nothing,
and makes the rulers of the earth as emptiness.

²⁴ Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown,
scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth,
when he blows on them, and they wither,
and the tempest carries them off like stubble. (Isa 40:15-17, 22-24)

¹⁶And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; ¹⁷and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." (Matt 3:16-17)

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. (John 1:1-3)

⁴Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; ⁶and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. (1 Cor 12:4-6)

⁴There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. (Eph 4:4-6)

¹⁵He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. ¹⁷And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. ¹⁹For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. (Col 1:15-20)

B. OTHER CREEDAL STATEMENTS

1. Westminster Shorter Catechism

Q4: What is God?

A: God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.

C. DISCUSSION

The Shema: Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one (Deut 6:4).

1. The Trinity

Development of the doctrine of the Trinity:

- First Ecumenical Council (Nicea, 325) affirmed the full deity of Christ.
- Second Council (Constantinople, 381) affirmed the full deity of the Holy Spirit.
- Fourth Council (Chalcedon, 451) completed the definition of the person and nature of Christ.
- Eastern Church (Greek): God is one *ousia* but three *hypostaseis*. As formulated by the Cappadocian Fathers (Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory of Nazianzus).
- Western Church (Latin): God is one *substantia* in three *personae*.

God is Three yet God is One

God is a unity yet God is a diversity

The Trinity is a community in which the Son is eternally *begotten* or *generated* and the Spirit eternally *proceeds*.

God always acts as a triune God: the Father acts through the Son by the agency of the Spirit.

2. Transcendent

- self-existent and self-sufficient: fully complete in and of himself, not needing anyone else. He is free, not contingent.
- incommunicable attributes: infinite, eternal, unchangeable
- three “omnis”: omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent
- Sovereign: *pantokrator* (Gk “ruler of all”)
- holy: “Other”; *mysterium tremendum et fascinans* (Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*).
- simple: God is integrated, whole
- apophatic theology: defines God negatively, as that which he is not (e.g., infinite, unchangeable), since it is impossible for the creature to define his creator positively.
- mysterious: beyond our capacity to comprehend

If there is no wonder, no experience of mystery, our efforts to worship will be futile...I will never bend my knees and say ‘Holy, holy, holy’ to that which I have been able to decipher and figure out in my own mind! That which I can understand will never bring me to the place of awe. It can never fill me with astonishment or wonder or admiration...These believers worship gladly because they have a high view of God. In some circles, God has been abridged, reduced, modified, edited, changed and amended until He is no longer the God whom Isaiah saw, high and lifted up. (A.W. Tozer, *Whatever Happened to Worship*, 66-67)

3. Immanent

Lat. *immanere*, to remain in.

communicable attributes

4. Erroneous views of the Trinity

- **Modalism**, aka **Sabellianism**: God is a single monad who revealed himself in three successive modes, as Father (creator and law-giver), as Son (redeemer), as Spirit (sustainer, giver of grace). (Sabellius, Rome c 198-220).
- **Monarchianism**: so stressed monotheism and unity of Godhead (Gk *mono-arche*, one source) as to deny any differentiation within the Godhead. Developed into two forms: adoptionism (dynamic monarchianism), modalism (modalist monarchianism, Sabellianism).
- **Tritheism**: three gods.

Holy God, We Praise Thy Name

Holy God, we praise Thy name;
Lord of all, we bow before Thee;
All on earth Thy scepter claim,
All in heaven above adore Thee.
Infinite Thy vast domain,
Everlasting is Thy reign.

Hark, the loud celestial hymn,
Angel choirs above are raising;
Cherubim and Seraphim,
In unceasing chorus praising,
Fill the heavens with sweet accord:
Holy, holy, holy Lord.

Lo! The apostolic train
Join Thy sacred name to hallow;
Prophets swell the glad refrain,
And the white-robed martyrs follow;
And, from morn to set of sun,
Through the Church the song goes on.

Holy Father, Holy Son,
Holy Spirit, Three we name Thee;
While in essence only One,
Undivided God we claim Thee,
And adoring bend the knee,
While we own the mystery.

German, 17th cent., Tr. Clarence A. Walworth, 1853
Based on *Te Deum Laudamus*, 4th cent. Latin

GOD THE FATHER

A. PBCC STATEMENT

God the Father is unique in nature. He is eternal, having no beginning or end. He is the Father of Jesus Christ whom He sent in bodily form. He is our Creator by virtue of our physical creation, and becomes our spiritual Father by election and adoption. He created mankind for the express purpose of fellowship with us as His children, to the praise of his Glory.

[Gen 1:1; Ps 102:12,25; 139:13-14; Acts 17:29; Eph 1:3-6]

- ¹² But you, O LORD, are enthroned forever;
you are remembered throughout all generations.
- ²⁵ Of old you laid the foundation of the earth,
and the heavens are the work of your hands. (Ps 102:12, 25)
- ¹³ For you formed my inward parts;
you knitted me together in my mother's womb.
- ¹⁴ I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Wonderful are your works;
my soul knows it very well. (Ps 139:13-14)

Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man. (Acts 17:29)

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵he predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. (Eph 1:3-6)

B. OTHER CREEDAL STATEMENTS

1. Apostles Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

2. Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

C. DISCUSSION

Creation: God the Father created through divine fiat (Lat. *fiat* "let it be") out of nothing (Lat. *ex nihilo*)

Immortal, Invisible, God only Wise

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
Almighty, victorious, Thy great name we praise.

Unresting, unhasting, and silent and light,
Nor wanting, nor wasting, Thou rulest in might;
Thy justice, like mountains, high soaring above
Thy clouds, which are fountains of goodness and love.

To all, life Thou givest, to both great and small,
In all life Thou livest, the true life of all;
We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,
And wither and perish, but naught changeth Thee.

Great Father of glory, pure Father of light,
Thine angels adore Thee, all veiling their sight;
All praise we would render, O help us to see
'Tis only the splendor of light hideth Thee.

Walter C. Smith, 1876
based on 1 Timothy 1:17

GOD THE SON

A. PBCC STATEMENT

By miracle of the virgin birth, the Lord Jesus Christ, eternal Son of God, became man without ceasing to be God in order to reveal God and to redeem man. Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah. He is the means of Creation, and the visible expression of the invisible God. No man comes to reconciliation with God the Father except through Jesus Christ.

[Isa 7:14; Matt 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-35; 2:7-12; 4:17-21; 24:25-27; John 1:1-2; 3:16; 14:6-12; Phil 2:5-12; Col 1:15-20; Heb 1:1-2]

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. (Isa 7:14)

¹⁸Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. ²⁰But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²²All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

²³ "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall call his name Immanuel"

(which means, God with us). ²⁴When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, ²⁵but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus. (Matt 1:18-25)

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" ²⁹But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, ³³and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

³⁴And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

³⁵And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. (Luke 1:26-35)

⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. ¹⁰And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." (Luke 2:7-12)

¹⁷And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written,

¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,

¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

²⁰And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹And he began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." (Luke 4:17-21)

²⁵And he said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" (Luke 24:25-27)

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. (John 1:1-2)

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

⁶Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him."

⁸Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." ⁹Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? ¹⁰Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.

¹²"Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. (John 14:6-12)

⁵Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

¹²Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, (Phil 2:5-12)

¹Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. (Heb 1:1-2)

B. OTHER CREEDAL STATEMENTS

1. Apostles Creed

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

2. Nicene Creed

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made.

Who, for us men and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again, with glory, to judge the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

Council of Constantinople, 381

3. Chalcedonian Definition

Therefore, following the holy Fathers, we all with one accord teach men to acknowledge one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, at once complete in Godhead and complete in manhood, truly God and truly man, consisting also of a reasonable soul and body; of one substance (*homoousios*) with the Father as regards his Godhead, and at the same time of one substance with us as regards his manhood; like us in all respects, apart from sin; as regards his Godhead, begotten of the Father before the ages, but yet as regards his manhood begotten, for us men and for our salvation, of Mary the Virgin, the God-bearer (*theotokos*); one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only-begotten, recognized in two natures, without confusion, without change, without division, without separation; the distinction of natures being in no way annulled by the union, but rather the characteristics of each nature being preserved and coming together to form one person and subsistence (*hypostasis*), not as parted or separated into two persons, but one and the same Son and Only-begotten God the Word, Lord Jesus Christ; even as the prophets from earliest times spoke of him, and our Lord Jesus Christ himself taught us, and the creed of the Fathers has handed down to us.

Council of Chalcedon, 451

C. DISCUSSION

Two components of Christology:

- The Person of Christ: who is Jesus?
- The Work of Christ: what did Jesus do?

1. The Pre-incarnate Son

- Eternal Son of God. He is the Father's "only-begotten" (Gk *monogenēs* John 1:14,18; 3:16,18; 1 John 4:9): the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; the Father has always had a Son.
- The means of Creation.

2. The Incarnate Christ

incarnation (Lat. *incarnatus*, being made flesh).

- conceived by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35).
- born of the Virgin Mary:
 - Jesus was born to an ordinary woman (contra Catholic teaching—see below).
 - the last and greatest of the births to a barren woman (cf. Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Manoah's wife, Hannah), "for nothing is impossible with God" (Luke 1:37; cf. Gen 18:14).
 - the promised seed, as promised in Gen 3:15 "the protoevangelium" (first gospel).
 - The Third Council (Ephesus 431) declared Mary *theotokos* (God-bearer, mother of God) but this title was more about Jesus than Mary.

The Catholic understanding of Mary

(Mariology, study of Mary; Mariolatry, worship of Mary)

Gabriel addressed Mary, "Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women*" Vg. *Ave gratia plena Dominus tecum benedicta tu in mulieribus* (Luke 1:28, but "blessed art thou among woman [TR] is probably a transposition from 1:42). The liturgical poem *Ave Maria* is based on this verse:

<i>Ave Maria, gratia plena</i>	Hail Mary, full of grace,
<i>Dominus tecum, benedicta tu</i>	the Lord is with you, blessed are you
<i>In mulieribus et Benedictus</i>	Among women and blessed is
<i>Fructus ventris tui, Jesus</i>	the fruit of your womb, Jesus
<i>Sancta Maria, Sancta Maria</i>	Holy Mary, Holy Mary,
<i>Maria, ora pro nobis</i>	Mary, pray for us,
<i>Nobis peccatoribus</i>	For us sinners,
<i>Nunc et in ora</i>	Now and at the hour,
<i>In ora mortis nostrae</i>	In the hour of our death.
<i>Amen</i>	Amen.

The Catholic Church teaches Mary's perpetual virginity, immaculate conception (dogma 1854) or bodily assumption (dogma 1950), her role as co-redemptrix, and her ongoing role of intercession. There is no Scriptural evidence for these doctrines.

The Lord Jesus Christ

- **Jesus** (Heb. *Yeshua*, *Yehoshua* "Yahweh is salvation"): a man who lived in space and time.
- **Christ** (Gk *Christos*, Heb *Mashiah* "anointed one"): the Messiah whom God sent in fulfillment of the Scriptures. Jesus is Prophet, Priest and King (the three OT covenant offices).
- **Lord** (Gk *kurios*, LXX translation for Heb *Yahweh*): fully God.

The God-man

“of one substance (*homoousios*) with the Father as regards his Godhead, and at the same time of one substance with us as regards his manhood” (Nicene Creed).

- **The Second Adam:** the last Adam (1 Cor 15:45), the second man, who is from heaven not from dust (1 Cor 15:47). Just as Adam functioned as the federal (Lat. *foedus* “covenant, treaty”) representative of all who are born in Adam, so Christ functions as the federal representative of all who are re-born in Christ.
- ***Homoousios*:** of one substance (*homoousios*) with the Father, not just of like substance (*homoiousios*).
- **Hypostatic union:** union of the divine and the human in Jesus Christ so that he is both fully human and fully divine, one *hypostasis* (being) and two *physeis* (natures).

3. Erroneous views of God the Son

- **Adoptionism:** Jesus was a human prophet, a “mere man,” whom God adopted at his baptism. (Theodotus, Rome c 190; Paul of Samasota, 3d cent)
- **Apollinarianism:** Christ took on a human body and soul but not a human mind or spirit. Rejected by Council of Constantinople, 381. (Apollinarius [ca. 310-391], bishop of Laodicea).
- **Arianism:** Christ is a created being, the first and highest of God’s creation. There was a time when the Son was not. Condemned by Council of Nicea, 325. (Arius, ca. 250 – ca. 336, presbyter of Alexandria).
- **Docetism:** Jesus was fully God, but only appeared (Gk *dokeō*, seem, appear) to be human.
- **Monophysitism:** Christ is of one nature. Repudiated by Chalcedonian Definition which declared that Christ has two inseparable natures.
- **Monothelitism:** Christ has a single will. Condemned by Council of Constantinople III, 680, which affirmed Christ has a human will and a divine will that function in perfect moral harmony.
- **Nestorianism:** Christ has two separable natures, human and divine. Condemned by Council of Constantinople, 381. (Nestorius, Bishop of Constantinople, 428-ca. 451).

4. The Purpose of the Incarnation

- to **reveal** God: to reverse the effects of the Fall on our *knowledge*. Jesus Christ is the climax of God’s self-revelation.
- to **redeem** man: to reverse the effects of the Fall on our *being*. Salvation is found only in Jesus Christ.

Of the Father’s Love Begotten

Of the Father’s love begotten,
Ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega,
He the Source, the Ending He,
Of the things that are, that have been,
And that future years shall see,
Evermore and evermore!

Christ, to Thee with God the Father,
And, O Holy Ghost, to Thee,
Hymn and chant and high thanksgiving
And unwearied praises be:
Honor, glory, and dominion,
And eternal victory,
Evermore and evermore!

Concerning God

O ye heights of heaven adore him;
Angel hosts His praises sing;
Powers, dominions, bow before Him,
And extol our God and King;
Let no tongue on earth be silent,
Every voice in concert ring,
Evermore and evermore!
Aurelius C. Prudentius, 4th cent.;
tr. John M. Neale and Henry W. Baker, 1859

GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

A. PBCC STATEMENT

The Holy Spirit is God, sent by the resurrected Jesus to reveal and glorify Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit living in the believer is the proof guaranteeing our inheritance in Jesus Christ. He provides spiritual gifts to all believers, and indwells, guides, teaches, empowers and comforts them. He convicts the world concerning sin, righteousness and judgment.

[John 14:16-17; 16:5-16; Acts 2:1-4,16-21; Rom 8:26-27; 1 Cor 2:12-16; Eph 1:13-14]

¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, ¹⁷even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. (John 14:16-17)

⁵But now I am going to him who sent me, and none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' ⁶But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. ⁷Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. ⁸And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: ⁹concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; ¹⁰concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; ¹¹concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

¹²I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

¹⁶"A little while, and you will see me no longer; and again a little while, and you will see me." (John 16:5-16)

¹When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. ²And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. ⁴And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance...

¹⁶"But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ " 'And in the last days it shall be, God declares,
that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh,
and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
and your young men shall see visions,
and your old men shall dream dreams;

¹⁸ even on my male servants and female servants
in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.

¹⁹ And I will show wonders in the heavens above
and signs on the earth below,
blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke;

²⁰ the sun shall be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood,
before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day.

²¹ And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.'" (Acts 2:1-4, 16-21)

²⁶Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. (Rom 8:26-27)

¹²Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. ¹³And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.

¹⁴The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. ¹⁵The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. ¹⁶"For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ. (1 Cor 2:12-16)

¹³In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. (Eph 1:13-14)

B. OTHER CREEDAL STATEMENTS

1. Apostles Creed

I believe in the Holy Ghost;

2. Nicene Creed

And we believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life; who proceeds from the Father [and the Son]; who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets.

C. DISCUSSION

1. The Holy Spirit is God

The Spirit was present at Jesus' baptism (Matt 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22):

⁹In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens opening and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. ¹¹And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." (Mark 1:9-11)

The Spirit is included in Jesus' trinitarian baptismal formula (Matt 28:19), Paul's trinitarian benediction (2 Cor 13:14), and John's trinitarian greeting (Rev 1:4b-5a):

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. (Matt 28:19).

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. (2 Cor 13:14).

Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, ⁵and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. (Rev 1:4b-5a)

Peter equates Ananias' lying to the Holy Spirit with lying to God:

But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit?... You have not lied to men but to God." (Acts 5:3-4)

2. Procession of the Spirit

Within the Trinity the Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father.

In the OT God sent the Spirit to accomplish his purposes on earth.

Since Pentecost the Spirit proceeds *from* the Father *through* the Son (he is sent *by* both Father and Son). During Jesus' life, God was present on earth in his Son. Post-Pentecost, God is present on earth in his Spirit.

3. The Work of the Spirit

- The Giver of Life: all God's work is done by the agency of his Spirit. He is the executive of the Trinity.
- Illumination:
 - "convicts the world concerning sin, righteousness and judgment" (John 16:8).
 - "to reveal and glorify Jesus Christ": to bring us to confess Jesus Christ as Lord (1 Cor 12:3).
- Counselor (paraclete, Gk *paraklētos* "supporter"):
 - Assurance: "The Holy Spirit living in the believer is the proof guaranteeing our inheritance in Jesus Christ."
 - "provides spiritual gifts to all believers" (Rom 12:6-8; 1 Cor 12:8-11; Eph 4:7-13; 1 Pet 4:7-11).
 - "indwells, guides, teaches, empowers, and comforts" all believers.
 - Sanctifies.

Come Down, O Love Divine

<p>Come down, O love divine, seek Thou this soul of mine, And visit it with Thine own ardor glowing. O Comforter, draw near, within my heart appear, And kindle it, Thy holy flame bestowing.</p>	<p>Let holy charity mine outward vesture be, And lowliness become mine inner clothing; True lowliness of heart, which takes the humbler part, And o'er its own shortcomings weeps with loathing.</p>
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<p>O let it freely burn, til earthly passions turn To dust and ashes in its heat consuming; And let Thy glorious light shine ever on my sight, And clothe me round, the while my path illuming.</p>	<p>And so the yearning strong, with which the soul will long, Shall far outpass the power of human telling; For none can guess its grace, till he become the place Wherein the Holy Spirit makes His dwelling.</p>
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Bianco da Siena (?-1434); tr. Richard F Littledale, 1867

CONCERNING MAN AND HIS NEED

A. PBCC STATEMENT

Man was created in the image of God and is loved by Him, but, through an inherited sinful nature and his own choice, is alienated, separated from God. In this condition, man is enslaved to the world, the flesh and the devil, and is under God's present wrath and ultimate righteous judgment.

[Gen 1:26-27; 3:1-7; Rom 1:18-21; 2:5-6; 3:23; 5:12-21; 6:23; Eph 2:1-3]

²⁶Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

²⁷ So God created man in his own image
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them. (Gen 1:26-27)

¹Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. ¶ He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" ²And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, ³but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" ⁴But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. ⁵For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." ⁶So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. ⁷Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. (Gen 3:1-7)

¹⁸For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. ¹⁹For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. ²¹For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. (Rom 1:18-21)

⁵But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed. ¶ ⁶He will render to each one according to his works. (Rom 2:5-6)

for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. (Rom 3:23)

¹²Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—¹³for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. ¹⁴Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come. ¶ ¹⁵But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. ¹⁶And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. ¹⁷If, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. ¶ ¹⁸Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. ¹⁹For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. ²⁰Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, ²¹so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Rom 5:12-21)

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom 6:23)

¹And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ²in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. (Eph 2:1-3)

B. DISCUSSION

1. The Image of God

- created: we are creatures dependent upon our Creator.
- created in the image and likeness of God (Gen 1:26).
- created for a purpose: “to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever” (*Westminster Shorter Catechism*).
- created for community: with God, with one another. The human race has corporate solidarity “in Adam.” Adam is our federal head.
- loved by God.

2. Sin

- the sin of Adam and Eve: moral autonomy.
- original sin (Augustine): we are born into a state of sin, because we are born “in Adam.”
- total depravity: every part of us is affected by sin, rendering us unable to respond to God.
- enslavement: to the world, the flesh, and the devil. Man is a free agent, making his own decisions, but sinful man has no “free will”: his will is enslaved, and he is unable to choose God’s way. We make sinful choices: sins of omission and commission.

3. Judgment

- present wrath: alienation, separation from God.
- ultimate judgment: the Day of the Lord, the day of wrath (*dies irae*) when God will vindicate himself and his people, punish those who oppose him and his people, and remove evil.

Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy

Come, ye sinners, poor and needy,
Weak and wounded, sick and sore;
Jesus ready stands to save you,
Full of pity, love and power.

Come, ye thirsty, come and welcome,
God’s free bounty glorify;
True belief and true repentance,
Every grace that brings you nigh.

Come, ye weary, heavy laden,
Lost and ruined by the fall;
If you tarry till you’re better,
You will never come at all.

Let not conscience make you linger,
Nor of fitness fondly dream;
All the fitness he requireth
Is to feel your need of him.

Joseph Hart, 1759

CONCERNING REDEMPTION

A. PBCC STATEMENT

Jesus Christ, who lived a sinless life on earth, voluntarily gave his life as a sacrifice for all the sins of mankind, was buried and rose bodily from the dead, and ascended to the right hand of the Father as Lord. He uniquely satisfied the just requirement of God for death as the penalty for sin. All who believe in Him are forever reconciled to God solely through Jesus' death on the cross. Everyone who is called into this relationship by God is granted every spiritual blessing that is in Christ, and will be perfected with Him. Nothing can separate the believer from the love of Christ.

[Luke 23:46; John 19:30; Acts 2:32-36; Rom 3:21-26; 8:29-39; 10:8-11; Eph 1:3-12; Phil 1:6; 1 John 2:2]

Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last. (Luke 23:46)

When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. (John 19:30)

³²This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. ³³Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.

³⁴For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says,

"The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand,

³⁵ until I make your enemies your footstool.'

³⁶Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified." (Acts 2:32-36)

²¹But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— ²²the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. ²⁶It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. (Rom 3:21-26)

²⁹For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. ³⁰And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

³¹What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³²He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? ³³Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. ³⁵Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ³⁶As it is written,

"For your sake we are being killed all the day long;
we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered."

³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom 8:29-39)

⁸But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); ⁹because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. ¹¹For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame." (Rom 10:8-11)

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵he predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. ⁷In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

¹¹In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things

according to the counsel of his will, ¹²so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. (Eph 1:3-12)

And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. (Phil 1:6)

He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. (1 John 2:2)

B. OTHER CREEDAL STATEMENTS

1. Apostle's Creed

I believe...in Jesus Christ our Lord; who...suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the father Almighty.

2. Nicene Creed

Lord Jesus Christ...Who...was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father.

C. DISCUSSION

We affirm certain historical facts about Jesus: he suffered, was crucified, descended into hell, rose again, ascended to heaven, and took his seat at God's right hand.

1. The Obedience of Christ

- active obedience: "lived a sinless life on earth." Jesus did what Adam and Israel had failed to do, to be obedient.
- passive obedience: Jesus obediently accepted all that God did to him.

2. Suffering

Jesus suffered (passion, Lat. *passus*) at the hands of both God and man.

3. Crucifixion

Crucifixion on a cross (Lat. *crux*) was the most extreme form of Roman capital punishment. Why did Jesus die?

- a. **Jews** condemned him as a blasphemer.
- b. **Romans** (Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judea, Samaria and Idumea, 26-36), while recognizing Jesus' innocence, crucified him as a rebel (Gk *lēistēs*) in place of Barabbas.
- c. **Jesus** died in obedience to his Father.
- d. God put Jesus to death to bring about our atonement.

The Atonement: the death of Jesus was for our atonement (reconciliation with God). There are different views of how this works:

1. Ransom theory: first theory adopted by the early church. God offered Jesus to Satan as a ransom in exchange for sinners. Satan accepted the exchange, but Jesus escaped his hold in hell, rising from the dead.
2. Subjective or exemplary theory: the crucifixion shows how much God loves us; its subjective effect upon us is that we respond in love. First proposed by Abelard (1079-1142).
3. Satisfaction theory: first proposed by Anselm (ca. 1033-1109), further developed by the Reformers. Sin damages God, for which God must seek satisfaction (distributive justice: God rewards virtue and punishes sin). Sinful man owes the satisfaction but only the sinless God can actually pay it. Satisfaction is provided by Jesus as our substitute. Because Jesus did not sin, he did not have to suffer any penalty or offer any satisfaction. Therefore God accepted his death as satisfaction for man.
 - a. Anselm: sin damages God because it is an affront to his majesty and honor. Through the substitutionary death of Jesus, God's honor is satisfied.

Concerning Redemption

- b. Reformation: sin is a breaking of God's law. Jesus paid the penalty for breaking God's law—*penal substitutionary atonement*. Christ's righteousness is imputed to us, just as our guilt was imputed to him. Through the atoning death of Christ, our sin is expiated (removed) and God is propitiated (his wrath is appeased).
4. N. T. Wright: Jesus, as Israel's representative, bore the curse that was Israel's for her failure to keep covenant. With Israel's destiny fulfilled, salvation can now come to the Gentiles. God's righteousness is fulfilled by declaring that those who are in Christ are his covenant people.

Sacrifice: Jesus sacrifice for us was substitutionary (vicarious).

Reconciliation: we are reconciled to God because our sins have been expiated and God has been propitiated.

- a. expiation: removal of sin with its guilt and penalty
- b. propitiation: appeasement of God's wrath.

Extent of the atonement:

- a. limited/particular: Christ died to save the elect.
- b. universal: Christ died for all and will save all.
- c. Christ's atoning death is sufficient for all, efficient for the elect, i.e., universal in provision, particular in application.

4. Descent into hell

Jesus descended into the realm of the dead (Heb *sheol*, Gk *Hades*), not the place of eternal punishment (Gk *Gehenna*). This clause, inserted into the Apostles' Creed in the 4th century, and not universally accepted, affirms that Jesus really died. He delivered the OT saints from this realm (harrowing of hell).

5. Resurrection

God's vindication of Jesus' obedience.

Proof that the power of death had been defeated.

6. Ascension and Session

- Forty days after the resurrection, Jesus entered heaven, where he was glorified.
- Session: Jesus entered heaven as the victorious king (Christus Victor). He reigns from heaven now as King over God's kingdom. From heaven he sends the Spirit and distributes the spoils of victory (spiritual gifts).
- Implications for believers: those who are "in Christ" are identified with him in his death and resurrection, and will be identified with him in his ascension and glorification. In rising from the dead and ascending to heaven, he is the firstfruits.

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ, my God;
All the vain things which charm me most—
I sacrifice them to His blood.

See, from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown.

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small:
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

Isaac Watts, 1707

CONCERNING MAN'S RESPONSE TO GOD

A. PBCC STATEMENT

Every person has the opportunity and the obligation to respond to God. All response to Him is initiated by God as he draws people to Himself. Those who repent of their sinfulness, and trusting in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ as full payment for their sin, receive Him as Lord and Savior, are forever reconciled to God the Father, and become a new creation in Jesus Christ.

[John 1:9-13; 3:16; 6:44; Acts 13:48; Rom 1:18-20; 10:8-9; Eph 2:8-9; 2 Cor 4:6; 1 John 5:11-13]

⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹²But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. (John 1:9-13)

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

“No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.” (John 6:44)

And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed. (Acts 13:48)

¹⁸For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. ¹⁹For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. (Rom 1:18-20)

⁸But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); ⁹because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (Rom 10:8-9)

⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹not a result of works, so that no one may boast. (Eph 2:8-9)

For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. (2 Cor 4:6)

¹¹And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹²Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

¹³I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life. (1 John 5:11-13)

B. DISCUSSION

Universal appeal of the gospel

1. Election

- a. Predestination:
- b. Double predestination:

2. Ordo salutis (Order of salvation)

God through his Spirit renews our heart (regeneration), and gives us faith, so we can repent. Those who repent and believe are justified and sanctified, and eventually glorified.

3. Justification by faith

sola fide: faith alone.

I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
“Come unto me and rest;
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down
Thy head upon My breast.”
I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary, and worn, and sad;
I found in Him a resting place,
And He has made me glad.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
“Behold, I freely give
The living water; thirsty one,
Stoop down, and drink, and live.”
I came to Jesus, and I drank
Of that life-giving stream;
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
And now I live in Him.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
“I am this dark world’s Light;
Look unto Me, thy morn shall rise,
And all the day be bright.”
I looked to Jesus, and I found
In Him my Star, my Sun;
And in that Light of life I’ll walk,
Till traveling days are done.

Horatius Bonar, 1846.

CONCERNING THE CHRISTIAN'S RESPONSIBILITY

A. PBCC STATEMENT

The Christian life is a transformation, in which Christ Himself lives His life through the believer. All believers are still capable of responding to the urges of the flesh, and when they do so they do not please God. They can choose, rather, to rely continually upon the indwelling Holy Spirit's power and love, and thus glorify and please the Father. Believers are to be baptized by water symbolizing their full participation in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

[Acts 2:37-39; Rom 6:15-18; 8:1-17; 12:1-2; 2 Cor 3:5-6,18; 5:17; Eph 2:10; 5:3-10]

³⁷Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" ³⁸And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself." (Acts 2:37-39)

¹⁵What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! ¹⁶Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? ¹⁷But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, ¹⁸and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. (Rom 6:15-18)

¹There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ²For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. ³For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. ⁶To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. ⁸Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁹You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

¹²So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. ¹³For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. ¹⁵For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" ¹⁶The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. (Rom 8:1-17)

¹I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ²Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. (Rom 12:1-2)

⁵Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God, ⁶who has made us competent to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life...¹⁸And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. (2 Cor 3:5-6, 18)

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (2 Cor 5:17)

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. (Eph 2:10)

³But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. ⁴Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. ⁵For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. ⁶Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. ⁷Therefore do not associate with them; ⁸for at one time you were

darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light ⁹(for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), ¹⁰and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. (Eph 5:3-10)

B. DISCUSSION

1. Union with Christ

When we come to faith we are united with Christ. The Christian life is dependent upon this relationship. Baptism signifies this as we are united with Christ in his death and resurrection. In the Christian life, Christ lives through us.

2. Sanctification

The work of making the believer holy. Three stages are often distinguished:

- positional sanctification: at the moment of regeneration we are sanctified, set apart by God unto God. This is entirely the work of God.
- ongoing sanctification: as Christ dwells in us through the Holy Spirit we are made increasingly holy as we are conformed to the image of God in Christ. There is tremendous debate about the roles of God and the believer in this process; the believer is both passive and active in his sanctification.
 - Catholic view: sanctification is part of justification, as God not only declares but makes one righteous.
 - Holiness view: Christians can so pursue holiness that after the conferral of a “second blessing” they enter a “higher life,” the “victorious Christian life,” a state of sinless perfectionism, in which they no longer sin and are completely consecrated to God; e.g. John Wesley, Nazarenes, Keswick movement.
 - Reformed view: obedience to the law (the “third use of the law”: to suppress sin, to lead to Christ, and to guide believers).
 - antinomian view: after salvation it doesn’t matter what we do (cf. Rom 6).
- future sanctification: the completion of the work of conforming us to the image of Christ. Upon death we are glorified and made fit for heaven, there to be with the Lord. This is entirely the work of God.

3. Baptism

Baptism is a sacrament, signifying entrance into God’s family and union with Christ, but there agreement ceases:

- *believers’ baptism*: baptism is for believers upon profession of faith. It does not effect entrance into the invisible Church, nor is it required. Most churches that practice believers’ baptism require baptism for admission into the visible church.
- *infant baptism* (paedobaptism): believers’ children are baptized also, for they are members of the visible Church; but this does not necessarily assume entrance into the invisible church, nor is baptism necessary for entrance into the invisible Church (cf. WCF 25, 28).
- *baptismal regeneration*: baptism signifies entrance into the Catholic church which is the same as the universal church. Baptism confers and is necessary for salvation, which is found in the Church alone.

May the Mind of Christ, My Savior

May the mind of Christ my Savior
Live in me from day to day,
By his love and power controlling
All I do and say.

May the word of God dwell richly
In my heart from hour to hour,
So that all may see I triumph
Only through his power.

May the peace of God my Father
Rule my life in everything,
That I may be calm to comfort
Sick and sorrowing.

May the love of Jesus fill me
As the waters fill the sea;
Him exalting, self abasing,
This is victory.

May I run the race before me,
Strong and brave to face the foe,
Looking only unto Jesus
As I onward go.

May his beauty rest upon me
As I seek the lost to win,
And may they forget the channel,
Seeing only him.

Kate Wilkinson, 1925

CONCERNING THE CHURCH

A. PBCC STATEMENT

The Church is the body of Christ on earth, and consists of all who have been regenerated by God. This body finds expression as local churches, operating under the direction of Jesus Christ as Lord and Head of His body, through elders, pastor-teachers, and evangelists, who equip the saints for the work of the ministry. All believers are responsible to utilize their spiritual gifts for the common good. All believers are His witnesses in the world and are to further the task of making disciples of all nations. All believers are to remember the sacrifice of the Lord on their behalf by observing the Lord's Supper until His return.

[Matt 28:18-20; Rom 5:10; 8:16-17; 12:3-8; 1 Cor 11:23-34; 12; Eph 4:11-12; 1 Pet 2:4-5, 9-10; 4:10-11]

¹⁸And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matt 28:18-20)

For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. (Rom 5:10)

¹⁶The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. (Rom 8:16-17)

³For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. ⁴For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, ⁵so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. ⁶Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; ⁷if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; ⁸the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. (Rom 12:3-8)

²³For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, ²⁴and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." (1 Cor 11:23-24)

¹Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed. ²You know that when you were pagans you were led astray to mute idols, however you were led. ³Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says "Jesus is accursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except in the Holy Spirit.

⁴Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; ⁶and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. ⁷To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. ⁸To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, ⁹to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, ¹⁰to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

¹²For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

¹⁴For the body does not consist of one member but of many. ¹⁵If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁶And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁷If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? ¹⁸But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. ¹⁹If all were a single member, where would the body be? ²⁰As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.

²¹The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." ²²On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, ²⁴which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, ²⁵that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶If one member suffers, all

suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.

²⁷Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. ²⁸And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. ²⁹Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? ³⁰Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? ³¹But earnestly desire the higher gifts.

And I will show you a still more excellent way. (1 Cor 12)

¹¹And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹²to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, (Eph 4:11-12)

⁴As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, ⁵you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ...¶ ⁹But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. (1 Pet 2:4-5, 9-10)

¹⁰As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: ¹¹whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. (1 Pet 4:10-11)

B. OTHER CREEDAL STATEMENTS

1. Apostles' Creed

I believe in the holy, catholic Church; the communion of saints.

2. Nicene Creed

I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

C. DISCUSSION

1. What is the Church?

Words

“church” < ME *kirke* < Gk *kyriakē* (*oikia*), “Lord’s (house).”

NT Gk *ekklēsia*. This is often defined etymologically as the group that is “called out” of the world (*ek* out + *kalēō* call). But Gk *ekklēsia* refers to an assembly, a group that is summoned together, cf.:

- assembly (L *ad-* to + *simul* together)
- congregation (L *congregatio*) < *com-* together + *gregare* gather)
- synagogue < Gk *synagōgē* < *syn-* together + *agō* bring)

OT Heb *qāhāl* 123x (LXX *ekklēsia* 68x, *synagōgē* 36x). Israel gathered together.

Conclusion: the Church is the people of God the Father, the body of Christ the Son, the temple of the Holy Spirit. Though separated by time and space the members of this family are viewed as gathered before God. The Church is the colony of heaven on earth, the kingdom of God.

One holy catholic and apostolic church

- one: one in Christ despite the division of the visible church
- holy: set apart as a body
- catholic: universal
- apostolic: founded on the teaching of the apostles

The visible church and the invisible Church

Catholics maintain an identity between the visible and invisible Church. There is only one true Church, that which submits to the authority of the pope as Christ's vicar general on earth, and whose leaders are in apostolic succession.

Protestants maintain a distinction between the visible church and the invisible church:

- invisible Church: all of God's people throughout time and space (includes OT saints and the redeemed in heaven).
- visible church: local assemblies of those who profess to be God's people.

The Church triumphant and the Church militant

- Church triumphant: the saints who have persevered and emerged victorious through death and are now gathered around the throne in heaven.
- Church militant: the saints on earth, still in the fight.

2. Church leadership

- Universal leadership: The Head of the Church is Jesus Christ. It is his body of which he is the head, God's kingdom over which he is king, God's flock over which he is the shepherd. It is God who builds the Church as he brings people into Christ to be his people.
- Local leadership: Jesus Christ leads through under-shepherds, people whom he has gifted for the proper functioning of local assemblies: elders, pastor-teachers, evangelists.

Eph 4:11-12 is PBC's charter verse when it comes to the functioning of the local church:

- who does the work of the ministry? the leaders equip the people to do the work of the ministry.
- apostles, prophets: these offices have ceased.
- elders: PBCC spiritual leadership rests with the board of elders. Elders are male. They are appointed not elected: the board formally recognizes someone whom the Lord is already using as an elder. They are appointed without term. The elders seek to find not their own will but the will of the Lord; therefore, decisions of the elder board are unanimous.
- pastor-teachers: a combined office. At PBCC the pastor-teachers are not necessarily elders. Some churches (e.g. certain Presbyterian churches) distinguish between ruling elders and teaching elders.
- evangelists:
- deacons: in many churches deacons function in spiritual leadership (effectively as elders), but deacon is a serving gift.

3. Spiritual gifts

Given through the Spirit to every one of God's people for the proper functioning of the church.

4. Mission

5. The Lord's Supper

What do we call it?

- communion, holy communion (L *communio* sharing < *communis* common).
- eucharist (Gk *eucharistia* gratitude < *eu-* well + *charis* favor)
- Lord's Supper
- Lord's Table
- Mass (L *missa*, dismissal; from priest's words of dismissal): Catholic celebration of the eucharist.

Is it a sacrament or an ordinance?

- ordinance: an ordained practice.

- sacrament: “the visible form of an invisible grace,” a “sign of a sacred thing” (Augustine).
- Catholic Church recognizes seven sacraments: baptism, confirmation, communion, penance, marriage, ordination, extreme unction.
- Protestant Church recognizes two sacraments: baptism, communion.

Christ’s presence

What did Jesus mean when he said, “This is my body...this is my blood”? There are four major theories of the eucharist, depending upon how Christ is considered to be present:

- transubstantiation: the Catholic view that upon consecration by the priest the bread and the wine are transformed into the actual body and blood of Jesus. Christ’s presence is real in the bread and wine.
- consubstantiation: Luther’s view (and hence the Lutheran view) that Christ’s body and blood is present “in, with and under” the bread and the wine. Christ’s presence is real in the bread and wine.
- memorialist: the view developed by Zwingli that this is a symbolic rite memorializing Christ’s self-giving on the cross and his last supper. Christ’s presence is real in the gathered believers, but he is not present in the bread and the wine.
- Calvinist: though Christ is not physically present in the bread and the wine he is sacramentally and really present. The elements themselves have no inherent power or grace; rather, grace is conveyed by God’s Spirit. When the Holy Spirit is present and the recipient receives in faith, the sacrament becomes a means of grace.

Frequency

People with a similarly high view of the eucharist arrive at very different conclusions about its frequency: either it is so important that it must be celebrated daily, or it is so important it must be celebrated rarely.

PBCC has no set policy, but currently tries to schedule communion once per month.

The Church’s One Foundation

The Church’s one foundation
Is Jesus Christ her Lord;
She is his new creation
By water and the Word:
From heaven he came and sought her
To be his holy bride;
With his own blood he bought her,
And for her life he died.

Elect from every nation,
Yet one o’er all the earth,
Her charter of salvation
One Lord, one faith, one birth;
One holy name she blesses,
Partakes one holy food,
And to one hope she presses,
With every grace endued.

’Mid toil and tribulation
And tumult of her war,
She waits the consummation
Of peace forevermore;
Till with one vision glorious
Her longing eyes are blest,
And the great Church victorious
Shall be the Church at rest.

Yet she on earth hath union
With God the Three in One,
And mystic sweet communion
With those whose rest is won:
O happy ones and holy!
Lord, give us grace that we,
Like them, the meek and lowly,
On high may dwell with Thee.

Samuel J. Stone, 1866

CONCERNING THE FUTURE

A. PBCC STATEMENT

There will be the imminent, bodily and visible return of Jesus Christ to this earth to bring to completion His kingdom, to judge the world in righteousness, to fulfill His prophetic promises to Israel and to the rest of mankind concerning the future, and to create a new heaven and a new earth. All people who have died will be raised from the dead, and those who have been redeemed will participate in eternal life in the presence of God, but those who have rejected Christ will suffer eternal punishment and separation from God.

[Matt 25:31-34, 41; 1 Cor 15:22-26, 40-44, 50-58; 1 Thess 5:1-11; 2 Thess 2:1-12; Rev 3:5; 20:12; 21:1-22:5]

³¹“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. ³²Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. ³⁴Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world...’ ⁴¹“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. (Matt 25:31-34, 41)

²²For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. ²³But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. ²⁴Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. ²⁵For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶The last enemy to be destroyed is death... ⁴⁰There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another. ⁴¹There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory.

⁴²So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. ⁴³It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. ⁴⁴It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.

⁵⁰I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. ⁵¹Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵²in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. ⁵³For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. ⁵⁴When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written:

“Death is swallowed up in victory.”

⁵⁵ “O death, where is your victory?

O death, where is your sting?”

⁵⁶The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁵⁸Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain. (1 Cor 15:22-26, 40-44, 50-58)

¹Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. ²For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³While people are saying, “There is peace and security,” then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. ⁴But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. ⁵For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. ⁶So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. ⁷For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. ⁸But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. ⁹For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him. ¹¹Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing. (1 Thess 5:1-11)

¹Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers, ²not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. ³Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, ⁴who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God. ⁵Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? ⁶And you know what is restraining him now so that he may be revealed in his time. ⁷For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way.

⁸And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming. ⁹The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, ¹⁰and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. ¹¹Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, ¹²in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness. (2 Thess 2:1-12)

The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of the book of life. I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels. (Rev 3:5)

And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. (Rev 20:12)

(Rev 21:1–22:5)

B. OTHER CREEDAL STATEMENTS

1. Apostles Creed

from thence [heaven] he [Jesus Christ our Lord] shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in...the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting.

2. Nicene Creed

He [Lord Jesus Christ] shall come again, with glory, to judge the quick and the dead.

I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

C. DISCUSSION

1. The Return of Jesus

Jesus Christ will return to earth, his [second] coming (*Gk parousia*).

- imminent: Jesus is returning soon, no matter how long the delay has been.
- bodily: not just a spiritual return.
- visible: everyone will see.

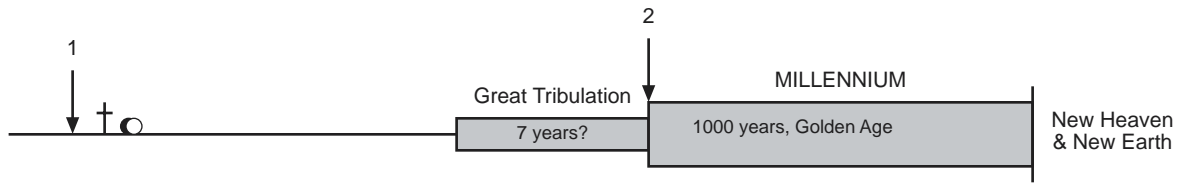
Believers still alive on the earth at the time of his coming will join him in the air (rapture) in order to escort him.

2. The Millennial Kingdom

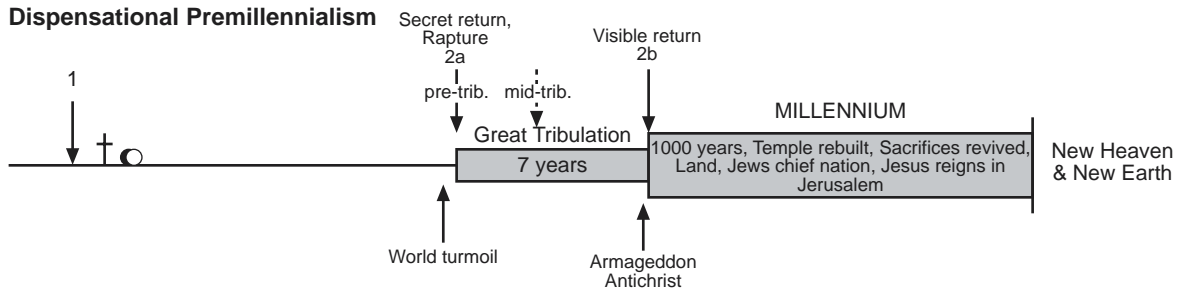
There is great debate over the nature of the millennium (“thousand years” < *L mille*, thousand + *annus*, year) described in Rev 20:2-7. There are four major views (presented below in their historical order):

- *historic premillennialism*: the view of many of the early church Fathers. After a period of tribulation, Christ will return before (pre-) and usher in the millennial kingdom of God on earth, a golden age of peace and prosperity. This view was also known as chiliasm (*Gk chilies*, thousand).
- *amillennialism*: established by Augustine who interpreted the thousand years symbolically of the entire period between Christ’s resurrection and his second coming. There is no (a-) millennial kingdom. During the Church Age, Satan is bound, Christ reigns on David’s throne in heaven, and the dead saints reign with him. This was the dominant view for over 1300 years.
- *postmillennialism*: the gospel will prevail upon the earth until at some unseen moment God’s kingdom is inaugurated on earth. Christ will return after (post-) this kingdom which may or may not last for exactly a thousand years. This view was popular in the 18th and 19th centuries when the gospel seemed to be prevailing, but two World Wars shattered this optimism. Postmillennialism has been revived in the form of Reconstructionism and Theonomy.

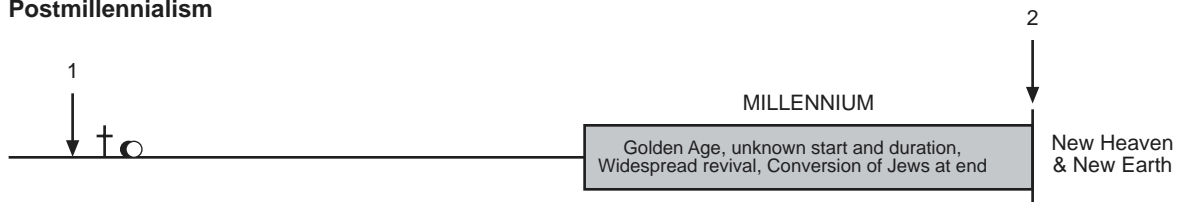
Historic Premillennialism



Dispensational Premillennialism



Postmillennialism



Amillennialism

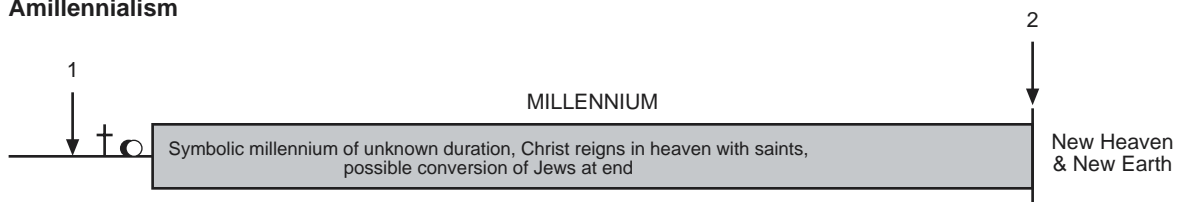


Figure 1: Different millennial timelines

- *dispensational premillennialism*: proposed by J. N. Darby, and taught during the US Bible conferences of the late 19th century; popularized by the Scofield Study Bible (1909). Christ will return twice. His first return will be secret, when he will rapture the Church out of the world up to heaven. This Rapture will be either at the beginning (pre-tribulation) or in the middle (mid-tribulation) of the seven-year Great Tribulation, at the end of which God's enemies will gather at Armageddon. Christ will return visibly to defeat these enemies, and to inaugurate his millennial kingdom on earth. The Church having been removed from the earth, this millennial kingdom is for Israel. All of the OT promises to Israel must be fulfilled in physical

Israel: Israel will acknowledge her Messiah, she will rise to world prominence, the Temple will be rebuilt in Jerusalem, sacrifices resumed, and Jesus will reign from David's throne in Jerusalem. The OT does not foresee the Church; none of the OT promises concern the Church. The Church was God's response to the Jews' rejection of the kingdom which Jesus offered them. During the Church Age the prophetic clock does not tick (this especially applies to the 70 years of Daniel 9:24-27; the clock is stopped between weeks 69 and 70).

progressive dispensationalism: a recent modification, which accepts that OT promises to Israel are fulfilled spiritually in the Church, but will also be fulfilled literally in future Israel (a "both...and" position).

3. The Relationship between Israel and the Church

There is considerable difference in how Christians view the relationship between Israel and the Church:

- Dispensational: Israel was God's people in the OT, to whom all the OT promises were made. She will again be God's people in the millennium, when those promises are literally fulfilled for her. In the meantime, the Church is something completely different. It has no organic relationship with OT Israel. The Church is a parenthesis in time.
- Both...and: God's OT prophetic promises are being fulfilled spiritually today in the Church, but will be fulfilled literally in millennium in Israel.
- One people of God: God destroyed the wall of division between Jew and Gentile, so that Gentiles can join Jews in the one family of God.
- Replacement: the Church has replaced Israel as the people of God.

4. Resurrection

Believers will receive the same resurrection body as Jesus:

- Believers living when Christ returns: will be glorified.
- Believers who have died: their souls went to heaven immediately (first resurrection); they will be re-embodied—the resurrection of the body.

Unbelievers will be raised for judgment: Hades, Sheol, the grave will give up their dead.

5. Judgment

6. The Eternal State

- eternal life in the presence of God.
- eternal punishment and separation from God. Some theologians argue for annihilation.

Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending

Lo, He comes with clouds descending,
Once for favored sinners slain;
Thousand thousand saints attending,
Swell the triumph of His train:
Alleluia! alleluia!
God appears on earth to reign.

Every eye shall now behold Him,
Robed in dreadful majesty;
Those who set at naught and sold Him,
Pierced and nailed Him to the tree,
Deeply wailing, deeply wailing,
Shall the true Messiah see.

Now redemption, long expected,
See in solemn pomp appear:
All His saints, by men rejected,
Now shall meet Him in the air:
Alleluia! alleluia!
See the day of God appear.

Yea, Amen! let all adore Thee,
High on Thine eternal throne;
Savior, take the power and glory,
Claim the kingdom for Thine own:
O, come quickly, O, come quickly!
Everlasting God, come down.

vv 1, 2, 5 Charles Wesley, 1758; v 3 John Cennick, 1752; alt. Martin Madan, 1760.