

# Gospel Convictions

## A call to evangelical integrity in truth and life

*In Scripture, God teaches us that true life is to be found only in the knowledge of the true and living God, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. [#He](#) also warns us that the times we live in will be marked by doctrinal error and godless living. We therefore commit ourselves to proclaim and contend for the following teachings of the Bible, being convinced that these truths express not only the liberating faith once for all delivered to the saints, but the points at which that faith is under threat at the present time.*

### **1. The truth and centrality of the gospel of Jesus, the crucified and risen Christ.**

The gospel is the momentous news concerning God's divine Son, who was sent into the world by his Father and who became the man Jesus Christ. The gospel declares that Jesus is God incarnate, that he lived a sinless life, that he died on the cross to bear God's righteous anger at us because of our sin, and that he was bodily raised from death and exalted to the right hand of God as the Lord and Ruler of the world (i.e. 'the Christ'). According to this same gospel, Jesus Christ will return as judge of the living and the dead, bringing eternal punishment on those who have not obeyed him, but salvation from wrath and eternal life to all who have repented and put their trust in him. The gospel thus commands a twofold response: turning back from our rebellion against God to submit to Jesus Christ as Lord (repentance), and trusting in the risen Christ alone for forgiveness of sins and eternal life (faith).

This gospel of Christ crucified demonstrates the wondrous love and righteousness of God, and reveals his eternal plan to unite all things in heaven and on earth under one

head, even Jesus Christ, to the praise of his glory and grace. By the proclamation of this gospel, God is gathering from every nation a people for his own possession—a people who are justified by Jesus' blood and zealous for good works.

25 Accordingly, we are opposed to any teaching that denies the unique and universal Lordship of the risen Christ as the only name under heaven by which people must be saved, that rejects the penal substitutionary atonement of the Cross, or that diminishes the reality of future judgement and hell. We also oppose any practice of Christian ministry that displaces the clear, faithful and frequent speaking of this gospel in  
30 favour of other emphases, such as social action or personal fulfilment, or that promises salvation without personal repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We also resist the call to any Christian 'unity' that is not based on the truth of this gospel.

## **2. The necessity of the indwelling work of the Holy Spirit to initiate and enable repentance and faith.**

35 In view of the universal sinfulness and spiritual deadness of all people, only the inward life-giving work of God's Holy Spirit can open our eyes to the truth of the gospel, and initiate repentance and faith (these being also the ~~basic ongoing essential~~  
Spirit-enabled responses to God's grace throughout the Christian life). All Christian  
believers are baptized in the Spirit, ~~and being born again~~ by his power ~~are born again~~  
40 to eternal life with God as our Father and Jesus as our Lord. The Spirit leads us to put to death the misdeeds of the body and to produce the fruit of holy living. He unites us as one body in Christ, and draws us together in local assemblies to love and encourage one another.

Accordingly, we reject any teaching that denies God's predestining sovereignty in  
45 bringing believers to new birth by his Spirit, and we oppose the worldliness that

resists the Spirit's leading towards daily holiness and love of our neighbour. While affirming the ~~powerful and miraculous ongoing supernatural~~ work of ~~God by his~~ God's Spirit in our ~~world today~~ lives, we ~~are opposed to any teaching disagree with the view~~ that ~~churches today should seek to display the full range of 'miraculous gifts' mentioned in the New Testament in order to be faithful, and effective in mission. We are also opposed to any teaching that~~ divides Christians according to their experience of the Spirit—whether on the basis of a so-called 'second blessing' or 'baptism' or 'filling' of the Spirit, or a ~~higher~~ more intense level of emotional experience, ~~or the exercise of miraculous gifts such as 'speaking in tongues', or or~~ the claim of ~~complete~~ to a higher level of victory over sin in this life.

### **3. The assurance of salvation that belongs to those who have been justified by the blood of Jesus and sealed by his Spirit.**

Those who by the Spirit's work trust in Christ's blood alone are now justified before God, are given eternal life and are assured of their salvation at the Last Day. This true living faith will always lead to the good works God has prepared for us to do, but these good works do not earn our salvation, either now or on the Last Day.

Accordingly, we are opposed to any teaching that undermines assurance of salvation for believers, either by denying our present justification, or by questioning our experience of the Spirit, or by requiring the performance of certain religious observances as necessary for salvation.

### **4. The authority and sufficiency of the God-breathed Scriptures for gospel truth and life.**

The gospel of Jesus Christ is revealed and explained in the writings of the Old and New Testaments. All the words of the Bible are God's words. They are not only true, reliable and authoritative, but God's sufficient means for teaching, rebuking,

correcting and training his people in every age. Whatever else it may entail, or however it may be supported, all Christian evangelism and ministry centre on the prayerful speaking of the Bible's truth.

Accordingly, we refute any view that diminishes the Bible's authority, such as those  
75 who place the Bible under the authority of the Church or scholarship. We also oppose the claim that sections of Scripture are erroneous (e.g. in rejecting the bodily resurrection of Christ) or no longer relevant (e.g. in denying the continuing validity of biblical gender distinctions or the Bible's teachings on sexual morality). We also stand  
opposed to any ~~who reject~~[view that rejects](#) the Bible's sufficiency by claiming access  
80 to new or fresh revelation—whether by ecstatic experience, words of knowledge, meditative contemplation, church councils or liturgical ritual.

### **5. The tension of gospel living in the world today.**

As those living between the resurrection and return of Christ, we rejoice and give thanks for all the good gifts we receive from God's hand in creation. We also count it  
85 all joy when we suffer the inevitable trials, illnesses and persecutions of this present evil age, knowing that in his goodness, God uses them to prove and strengthen our faith. In the midst of our trials, we entrust ourselves to God and devote ourselves to doing good, confident that he will deliver us, either now or in the age to come. We long for the resurrection of the dead and the new creation, which God will bring  
90 decisively in his own secret time at the return of Jesus Christ, and in which all the blessings won by Christ will be experienced in their fullness, including freedom from sickness, pain, injustice, poverty and death.

Accordingly, we stand opposed to the 'social gospel', the 'prosperity gospel' and the 'healing gospel'—all of which falsely seek to draw into this age the blessings of the

95 next. We also lament how many are in love with this present world and its pleasures,  
rather than longing for the age to come.

### **6. The urgency of gospel living in the world today.**

By their nature, these glorious gospel truths demand not only to be proclaimed and  
contended for, but also to be lived. To assent to these truths without also enacting  
100 them in our lives is neither to understand them nor really to believe them.

Thus, in the power of the Holy Spirit, and with our hearts compelled by the love of  
Christ, we declare our determination to:

- abandon our lives to the honour and service of Christ in daily holiness and  
decision-making
- 105 • pray constantly in Christ's name for the fruitfulness and growth of his gospel
- speak the Bible's life-changing word whenever and however we can—in the  
home, in the world and in the fellowship of his people.

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