

CO-MISSION: **PLANTING**

APPENDIX 1

THE CO-MISSION STATEMENT OF FAITH

In joyful gratitude to the Lord God for our salvation in his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, we affirm wholeheartedly the following Statement of Faith as consistent with Scripture and central to our teaching, preaching, pastoring, church planting, ministries of care, and global evangelism:

GOD – THE HOLY TRINITY

There is only one God, who exists eternally in three distinct but equal persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. He is immortal, eternal, and perfectly and exhaustively knows the end from the beginning. He is unchangeable in his holiness, justice, wisdom and love. He is the almighty Creator; Saviour and Judge, sovereign in the election, salvation and preservation of his people in Christ. God is sovereign over all things, both good and evil; though, he is not the author of evil, nor does he delight in it.

THE BIBLE

God has revealed himself and his promises in the Bible, which consists of the Old and New Testaments alone. Every word was inspired by God through human authors, so that the Bible as originally given is, in its entirety, the Word of God, without error and fully reliable in fact and doctrine. The Bible is clear to all who seek God's will and are willing to live by it, though the human mind is finite and fallen in its reading of it. The Bible alone speaks with final authority and is always sufficient for all matters of belief and practice.

THE HUMAN RACE

All men and women, being created in the image of God, have inherent and equal dignity and worth. This dignity is not annulled by gender role distinction or male headship in marriage and in church leadership. Their greatest purpose is to obey, worship and love God. Adam and Eve, our first parents, rebelled against God and plunged themselves and their offspring into ruin. Because of Adam's sin, every aspect of human nature has been corrupted and all men and women are without spiritual life, guilty sinners and hostile to God. Every person is therefore under the just condemnation of God and needs to be reborn, justified, forgiven, reconciled to God in Christ in order to know and please him.

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

The Lord Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin, and lived a sinless life in obedience to the Father. He taught with authority and all his words are true. On the cross he died in the place of sinners, bearing God's punishment for their sin, redeeming them by his blood and reconciling to God all those who believe. He rose bodily from the dead and so was vindicated by his Father. He broke the power of death and defeated Satan, and brought everlasting life to all his people. In his resurrection body he ascended into heaven where he is exalted as Lord of all. He intercedes for his people in the presence of the Father. Salvation is in and through the Lord Jesus Christ alone.

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SALVATION

Salvation is entirely a work of God's grace and cannot be earned or deserved. From all eternity God determined in grace to save a great multitude of guilty sinners from all peoples, and to this end foreknew them, predestined them and chose them. This plan of salvation has been accomplished in history by the Lord Jesus Christ's once and for all penal substitutionary death, resurrection and ascension. This salvation now is offered freely and openly to all through the gospel. God in his love sovereignly applies this accomplished salvation to the elect through union with his Son. In Christ he effectually calls, regenerates and grants his elect repentance and faith. The elect are justified through faith alone, in Christ alone, by grace alone. In Christ, God mercifully imputes to believers the righteousness of his Son, so that they are declared righteous in his sight and pardoned of all sin. In Christ they are adopted into the family of God, progressively sanctified by the Holy Spirit for holiness and are preserved for the coming Kingdom and New Creation.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity and is fully God. He has been sent by the Father and the Son. In his work He glorifies the Son and applies the work of salvation to God's people through union with the Son. He regenerates and imparts spiritual life to spiritually dead sinners, so that they are convicted of sin and repent and believe. The Spirit inspired all Scripture and speaks in Scripture today. He indwells all believers, brings assurance of salvation and, while believers still battle personal and corporate sin, the Spirit progressively produces in believers increasing likeness to Christ. He gives gifts to build up the Church and empowers its members for worship, service and mission.

THE CHURCH

The universal Church is the body of which Christ is the head and to which all who are saved belong. It is made visible in local churches, which are central to the saving plan of God, and are led by godly, accountable elders. They are congregations of believers who are committed to each other for the worship of God, the preaching of the Word, and the administering of the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. They are to engage in pastoral care and discipline, mutual love and encouragement, to call all people to repentance and faith in the gospel of Christ, and to equip believers for world mission, mercy, and justice. The unity of the body of Christ is expressed within and between churches by mutual love, care and encouragement. True fellowship between churches exists only where they are faithful to the gospel.

THE FUTURE

The Lord Jesus Christ will personally and bodily return in glory. He will raise the dead and judge the world in righteousness. Unbelievers will be sent to eternal conscious punishment where they are separated from the benevolent presence of God in Hell. Those who live by faith in Christ will be welcomed into a life of eternal joy in fellowship with God in the promised New Creation. God will make all things new and will be glorified in all things forever.