

IBC Essen Statement of Faith

1 The Scriptures

We believe that the Holy Bible, consisting 66 books in the Old and New Testaments, is the inspired Word of God, inerrant in the original manuscripts, and the sole and final authority for faith and life. It was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

(2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Psalm 19:7-11; Hebrews 4:12)

2 God

We believe there is one, and only one, living and true God, creator of heaven and earth. He is eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, equal in every divine perfection.

(Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; John 4:24)

2.1 God the Father

We believe God the Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all-powerful, all-knowing, all-loving, and all-wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ.

(Psalm 103:19; Matthew 6:9; Romans 8:28-30, 1 Timothy 1:17)

2.2 God the Son – Jesus Christ

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. In His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin.

(John 1:1-14; Luke 1:35; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Hebrews 1:1-4; Hebrews 4:15;)

2.3 God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He regenerates, sanctifies, seals, and indwells every believer at the moment of salvation, empowering them for godly living and service.

(John 16:7-13; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Ephesians 1:13-14; Titus 3:5)

3 Mankind

Mankind is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. Men and women, although distinct, are equal in dignity, honor, worth, and are together co-heirs with Christ. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. We believe that all people are sinners by nature and by choice and are, therefore, under condemnation from which they are incapable of saving themselves.

(Genesis 1:26-27; Romans 3:10-23; Romans 5:12-19; Ephesians 2:1-3)

4 Salvation

We believe that God, by His grace alone, has provided the only means for salvation through the sacrificial, atoning, and substitutionary death of Jesus Christ and His resurrection. We receive eternal life and enter a personal relationship with God, when by faith we confess and repent of our sin and commit our lives to Jesus Christ, our only Savior. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

(Ephesians 2:8-9; John 3:16; Romans 5:1; Titus 3:5; 2 Corinthians 5:17, Romans 3:23, 5:8, 6:23, 10:9-13; 1 John 1:9)

5 The Church

We believe the Church is the Body of Christ, made up of all true believers with Christ as the head. A local church is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel, observing the ordinances of Christ, and exercising the gifts and privileges given by the Holy Spirit, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth.

(Ephesians 1:22-23; Acts 2:41-42; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Matthew 16:18)

6 Church Ordinances

We believe that Christ has, according to the Scriptures, instituted two church ordinances for believers – Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in and identification with a crucified, buried, and risen Savior.

The Lord's Supper is a memorial of Christ's death and a time of self-examination, proclamation and celebration, practiced until He returns.

(Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:41; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29)

7 The Christian Life

We believe that all believers are called to a life of holiness and separation from the world's sinful practices. Sanctification is both a positional and progressive work of God in the life of every believer. It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations, as commanded by the Lord Jesus Christ.

(Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 12:1-2; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7; 1 Peter 1:15-16; Galatians 5:22-23)

8 Spiritual Gifts

We believe the Holy Spirit indwells and gives spiritual gifts to each believer to love, serve, and edify the Church according to the biblical definition, order, and function of those gifts for the glory of God. Each believer has a spiritual gift, and therefore has a ministry to be exercised within the local church.

(Ephesians 1:13-14, 4:16; 1 Corinthians 12-14; Hebrews 2:4; Romans 12:4-8)

9 Future Things

We await the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth in his full glory and power and the establishment of his eternal kingdom. We believe in the resurrection of the dead, the final judgment of all humanity, the eternal joy in God's kingdom for those who are made righteous through faith in Jesus Christ alone, and the endless suffering in hell of those who do not place their faith in Him.

(Matthew 24:1-25:46; John 14:3; Acts 1:11; 1 Corinthians 3:10-15, 15:50-54; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18; Revelation 20:11-15, 21:1-4; Acts 1:9-11; Revelation 19:11-16)