Declaration of Faith [1]



There are thousands of different beliefs or preferences under the name of Christianity. As such I decided to lay out the beliefs which I hold so that my visitors do not have to speculate on what my positions are. This is particularly important for me to do, as I have never been (formally) confirmed into an institutionalised church.

Orthodoxy

- I hold to the Apostles' [2] and Nicene [3] creeds.
- I believe that the Bible is the Word of God; written by men, but ultimately contains God's full and sufficient revelation to mankind.

These two points of faith mean that I believe in what is generally and widely considered to be Christian orthodoxy1. Belief systems which claim to be Christian, but deny any of the points contained in the above statements, are generally and widely considered to be Christian cults2, because they fall *outside* of Christian orthodoxy.

Non-essential Beliefs

The points mentioned in the previous section are necessary to understand the core message of the Christian faith and, as such, *necessary* for salvation.

The points outlined in the section below are, to my understanding, not necessary for salvation. As such, I can gladly engage with people who hold different views (but who hold to Christian orthodoxy) as brothers and sisters in Christ. That is not to say that the points below are not important and the Christians should not have sincere dialogue around them. But because we are limited in our understanding and God is infinite, the points below (and the opposing views) are usually at best

approximations of how things really are.

All that said, I believe in the following:

- I believe in a physical resurrection (as opposed to only a spiritual resurrection) and that those saved by Jesus Christ will one day inherit a new, physical world.
- I believe that sin entered the world through the willful sinning of Adam and Eve, that they acted as representatives of all of mankind and that any of us, being in their position, would fall short of the perfect obedience required by God.
- I believe in the tripartite nature of man: body, soul (psyche) and spirit.
- I believe in a physical hell and eternal torment (as opposed to annihilationism).
- I believe in the five pillars of the reformation:
    - *Sola scriptura*, Scripture alone: The Bible is the only and sufficient rule for governing issues of life and doctrine.
    - *Solus Christus*, Christ alone: Jesus Christ is the sole mediator between God and man, and through His death and resurrection only is salvation possible.
    - *Sola gratia*, Grace alone: Our justification and salvation are both solely by the sovereign grace of God.
    - *Sola fide*, Faith alone: Our justification before God is by faith in Christ alone, and not by works.
    - *Soli Deo gloria*, Glory to God alone: All glory and honour is due to God alone.
- I am a Molinist. This means I believe in God's foreknowledge of all people's free will choices under every circumstance.
- I believe in
    - Common grace: that it is God who enables the depraved and sinful to still do and experience good things; and
    - Prevenient grace: that God enables all people to freely respond positively to the gospel.
- Following from the two points directly above, soteriologically I hold to the following five points:
    - *Radical depravity*: People are by nature evil, deprived and wicked, although many have a deep or superficial desire to be reconciled with their Maker.
    - *Sovereign election*: God chose His elect through His foreknowledge and knowledge of counterfactuals on the free will choices of people.
    - *Unlimited atonement*: Reconciliation with God through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is available to all people.
    - *Resistible grace*: People can willfully reject the offer of reconciliation with God which He has made available to all people.
    - *Conditional preservation*: People can freely choose to forsake God and the atonement made by Jesus Christ having previously believed.

Many Christians will disagree with me on many of these points. However I hope that, rather than bickering amongst ourselves, we can work together and constructively to furthering God's kingdom.

In necessariis unitas, in dubiis libertas, in omnibus caritas.

- 1. For example, the same criteria is used by International Christian Concern [4] when they define [5] "all Christians" whom they help.
- 2. Examples would include the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons), the Watchtower Society (Jehovah's Witnesses), and various gnostic religions.

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[1] https://siyach.org/node/98
[2] https://siyach.org/node/102
[3] https://siyach.org/node/101
[4] http://www.persecution.org
[5] http://www.persecution.org/about-us/who-we-are/