

Faith and Life

Scripture teaches us that children are a gift from the Lord. This gift comes with the responsibility to train up our children in the way they should go; to bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord. When children are baptized, we promise to help instruct them in the faith. Part of the way we fulfill this promise is through the various ministries in this church: Gems, Cadets, Youth, Sunday School, Catechism etc.

Given the importance of teaching the young impressionable minds of this church and given the importance of ensuring that this teaching is Biblical, we, the consistory of Stratford CRC, have released this statement of faith. This statement is meant to clarify the core values of this church. Based on our interpretation of scripture and as we teach and admonish each other, these are issues on which we cannot compromise.

What we believe about God the Father.

1. There is only one true God, Creator of heaven and earth, who eternally exists in three distinct persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God created all things, and all things exist for the glory of God. God created all things perfectly, mankind through disobedience and sin brought a curse on all creation. ⁽¹⁾

What we believe about Jesus Christ, the Son.

1. Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, was born of a virgin and is both fully God and fully human. ⁽²⁾
2. Jesus Christ was crucified as the sacrifice to pay the penalty for sin. His sacrifice is sufficient for the complete forgiveness of all our sins. We are incapable of earning this salvation in any way; it is a gift of grace alone. ⁽³⁾
3. Jesus Christ physically rose from the dead, physically ascended into heaven, and will one day physically return. ⁽⁴⁾
4. Everyone who believes in their heart, and confesses with their mouths that Jesus Christ is Lord, will be saved. Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no name under Heaven given to men by which we must be saved. ⁽⁵⁾

What we believe about the Holy Spirit

1. The Holy Spirit, as well as the Father and the Son, is eternal God.
2. He has been given to me personally, so that, by true faith, he makes me share in Christ and all his blessings. He also comforts me and remains with me forever. ⁽⁶⁾

What we believe about the Bible:

1. All scripture is inspired by God. As such, the Holy Bible is the true inerrant word of God. It is the sole infallible source of authority for Christian faith and practice. ⁽⁷⁾
2. While everyone's experiences are subjective, we believe that there is objective truth found in the scriptures. ⁽⁸⁾
3. Scripture teaches that, although we are saved by grace, we are still commanded to live in obedience to God's will for our lives. ⁽⁹⁾
4. Scripture teaches us that there will be a future physical resurrection of the dead. Only those whom the Lord calls will be raised to eternal life. Those who do not turn from sin and to Jesus will be raised to eternal punishment. ⁽¹⁰⁾

What we believe about mankind:

1. All humanity- Christ excluded- is sinful by both birth and action. The deserved penalty for sin is physical and spiritual death. ⁽¹¹⁾
2. Our life is given to us by God, and He knows the plans that he has for us. Our days have been numbered by Him. We believe all life is sacred between conception and natural death and should not be terminated including by abortion or euthanasia. ⁽¹²⁾
3. God created man and woman. He created each sex with unique and complementary characteristics and assigned them unique roles; the genders are not interchangeable. ⁽¹³⁾
4. Marriage is an institution ordained by God. It is a relationship established by mutual vows between one man and one woman, covenanting to live together in a lifelong, exclusive partnership of love and fidelity. ⁽¹⁴⁾
5. Sex is a gift from God to be enjoyed within the institution of marriage. Sex outside of the covenant of marriage is sinful; likewise, pornography is a perversion of the gift of sex and is also sinful. ⁽¹⁵⁾

Footnotes

- (1) Heidelberg Catechism Lord's Day 8 Question & Answer 24 and 25, Lord's Day 9 Question & Answer 26
- (2) Heidelberg Catechism Lord's Day 5 and 6
- (3) Colossians 1 vs 12-14 and Ephesians 2 vs 8-10
- (4) Act 1 vs 11 and the Apostles Creed
- (5) Romans 10 vs 9 and 10 and Acts 4 vs 12, Heidelberg Catechism Lord's Day 11, Question & Answer 9 and 30. 1 John 4 vs 7-12, John 3 vs 16. Canons of Dordt first main point of doctrine.
- (6) Heidelberg Catechism Lords Day 20 Question & Answer 53
- (7) 2 Timothy 3 vs 16,17
- (8) 2 Peter 1 vs 20,21
- (9) James 2, Heidelberg Catechism Lord's Day 32 Question & Answer 86 and 87, Lord's Day 33 Question & Answer 88,89,90,91
- (10) Canons of Dordt the second main point of doctrine, Article 5 and 6
- (11) Canons of Dordt the second main point of doctrine, Article 2 and 3
- (12) Jeremiah 1 vs 5, Psalm 139 vs 13-16, Deuteronomy 5 vs 17
- (13) Genesis 2 vs 18-24
- (14) Matthew 19 vs 3-6, Mark 10 vs 6-9, Ephesian 5 vs 22-32
- (15) Leviticus 18, Deuteronomy 22 vs 13-19

Reference

Great Lakes Catechism on Marriage and Sexuality

https://psalt.info/media/great_lakes_catechism_on_marriage_and_sexuality.pdf