

VICTORY BIBLE COLLEGE – Doctrinal Statement

We have created this expanded version of the VCI statement of faith for use at Victory Bible Colleges International. While we recognize that there are many secondary issues within the Christian faith (wherein is room for differences of opinion and honest debate), we feel that the following seven articles represent Christianity's most central and fundamental truths. Therefore, we feel these doctrines cannot be compromised.

I. Article One - THE GODHEAD

We believe in one true and living God, eternally existing and revealed to us as the Father, the Son (Jesus Christ, God incarnate), and the Holy Spirit – (Matt. 28:19; John. 1:1,14).

- A. THE NATURE & ATTRIBUTES OF GOD** – The attributes of God can be divided into two main categories: His communicable attributes – (those attributes He shares with us), and His incommunicable attributes – (attributes that belong to Him, alone).

GOD'S INCOMMUNICABLE ATTRIBUTES: We Believe that God is...

- **Eternally Self-Existent** – God never had a “beginning” and He will never have an “end”. He has always been, and ever will be – (Exodus 3:13-14).
- **Self-Sufficient** – God has never had (in eternity past), nor will He ever have (in the ages to come), a need for which His own Divine Nature has not already provided.
- **Infinite** – God has no limitations, other than those He has placed upon Himself.
- **Omnipresent** – (Present with His whole being, everywhere at once), **Omnipotent** – (All-powerful); and **Omniscient** – (All-knowing). He possesses complete and perfect knowledge of all things past, present and future. This knowledge includes not only actual knowledge, but extends to include knowledge of every possible outcome of every course of action.
- **Immutable (Unchangeable)** – God never differs from Himself. His character and nature remain constant and unchangeable. The way God deals with man may change from age to age, and from dispensation to dispensation, but God Himself, in his Essence and Person, can never change.
- **Sovereign** – Sovereignty does not mean that God arbitrarily acts without accountability to any standard, or code of moral law. The Sovereignty of God is limited by what He has said in His Word. God is powerful enough to do anything, yet He will not act contrary to what He has already said in His Word.

GOD'S COMMUNICABLE ATTRIBUTES: We believe God is...

- **Holy, Righteous, Faithful and Just** – God is above reproach in both His character and His actions. He is fair and equitable in all of His dealings with mankind.
- **Loving** – We believe that God loves all men equally and unconditionally – loving each one as much as He loves Christ, Himself (John 17:23). God is capable of loving the sinner, while abhorring the sin they are involved in (John 3:16;

Ephesians 2:1-5; Romans 5:8). This unconditional love, however, does not interfere with Divine Justice/Discipline, when God's love has been rejected or His commandments persistently broken.

- **A Person** – As such, He exhibits all of the elements involved in personality. He creates (Gen. 1:1); He destroys (Gen. 28:26); He provides (Ps. 104:27-30); He promotes (Ps. 75:6-7); He cares (1 Peter 5:6-7); He hears (Ps. 94:9-10); He hates (Prov. 6:16); He loves (John 3:16); He grieves (Gen. 6:6), etc.

B. THE TRINITY

- **Tri-Unity** – We believe that the Bible sets before us three Divine Persons, each distinct in office from the others, and yet so perfectly one in character and harmony that they constitute one Godhead, and not three Gods. These three Persons have precisely the same nature, attributes, and perfections, and are worthy of precisely the same homage, confidence and obedience.

We believe that the Bible denies the doctrine of Modalism. This (“Jesus-only”) view asserts that there is but one Divine Person Who appears to us in three different forms or “modes”.

- **God the Father** – reigns with providential care over the universe & all living creatures, orchestrating human history according to His own purpose and will. He is all-powerful, all-knowing, all-loving, and all-wise. Although He is known as “God the Father”, He is not the Father of all of mankind. He is only “Father” to those who have become His children through faith in Jesus Christ – (John 8:44; John 1:12).
- **Jesus Christ** – We believe in the deity of Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, substitutionary death for our sins, bodily resurrection, ascension unto God, and imminent return in power and glory – (Matt. 1:21-25; Isa. 53:5; Matt. 28:5-6; Acts 1:9; John 14:3).

In His incarnation, Jesus was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. In his earthly ministry, He perfectly revealed and accomplished the will of God – taking upon Himself sinless human nature and identifying Himself completely with mankind.

Christ honored Divine Law by His personal obedience, and through His substitutionary death, made provision for the redemption of all mankind. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the same Person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven where He sits at the right hand of God – the One Mediator, fully God and fully man. In the future, He will return in power and glory to judge the world in righteousness.

- **The Holy Spirit** – The Holy Spirit is fully Divine, as are the other two Members of the Godhead. It was He who inspired the Scriptures, and moved the holy men of old to record them. He is the “agent” in salvation, calling men to the Savior, and effecting regeneration in all those who receive God's free Gift. At the moment of the New Birth, He baptizes (immerses) the new believer into the Body of Christ.

The Holy Spirit's ministry to the believer includes: His indwelling presence, the development of Christian character, instruction and comfort, and the bestowal of spiritual gifts upon every member of the Body of Christ – that they might serve both God and His Church. The Spirit seals the individual believer unto the day of

redemption – His very presence being the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ.

We believe in the baptism of the Holy Spirit – an experience distinct from and subsequent to the new birth, evidenced initially by speaking with other tongues, and subsequently by the manifestation of spiritual power in public testimony and service (Acts 1:8; 2:4; 10:44-46; 19:2,6). Every believer is entitled to this promise of the Father (Acts 2:38-39), and should earnestly seek to experience it.

II. Article Two - THE BIBLE

We believe that the Holy Scriptures are the inspired, inerrant, and complete revelation of God's will for man. It is in the Bible that God reveals His plan of salvation (through the grace of Jesus Christ), as well as His general will for our daily lives – (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 1 Peter 1:23-25; Heb. 4:12).

- **Inerrancy** – We believe that Divine inspiration extends equally and fully to all parts of the Bible, as it appeared in the original manuscripts. We believe that all Scripture is true and trustworthy, and is the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and religious opinions must be tried. “Trustworthy is the Word, and worthy of unqualified acceptance” (1 Timothy 1:15 Wuest).
- **The Bible's Focus** – We believe that all of the Scriptures, Old and New Testament, center around the Lord Jesus Christ in His Person and Redemptive work on the Cross. Therefore, no portion of Scripture is properly read, or understood, until it leads to Him.

III. Article Three - MAN

We believe that man was created in God's image. By voluntary transgression, man fell, and his only hope of redemption is through God's Son, Jesus Christ – (Gen. 1:26-31; 3:1-7; ;Rom. 5:12-21).

- **Man's Three-fold Nature** – We believe that man consists of three separate and distinct parts: He is a spirit, he has a soul, and he lives in a physical body. With his spirit, man contacts the spiritual realm. With his soul, man contacts the intellectual and emotional realms. And, with his body, man is able to contact the physical realm.
- **Original Sin** – By willful transgression, the first man (Adam) fell from innocence, and through this act of original sin, his posterity inherited a nature and an environment that are tainted with and inclined toward sin. As soon as men are capable of moral action – (when they reach the “age of accountability”) – they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Children too young to have reached this age of accountability would go to Heaven, in the event that they should pass away.
- **The Total Depravity of Man** – The term “total depravity” should be defined. This doctrine does not state that man is “as bad as he can be”. Rather, it holds that man is as “bad off” as he can be. His total moral, mental and spiritual natures have been perverted by the fall, and apart from the redemptive work of Christ, man abides (without hope) under the wrath of God.
- **Types of Death** – When Adam sinned, death entered the human race. The word “death” as it is used in the Bible, never means “to cease to exist”. Rather, it refers to a “separation”. There are three kinds of death, mentioned in the Bible: (a) “Physical Death” is the separation of a man's spirit and soul from his body; (b) “Spiritual Death” is the separation of a man's spirit from the life and nature of God; and (c) “Eternal

Death” refers to the eternal separation of a man from God (spirit, soul and body), in the Lake of Fire. Physical death is an *event*; spiritual death is a *condition* before God; and eternal death is a *destiny*.

After physical death, both the saint and the sinner are in a state of full consciousness. The lost are confined in “hell” – (Hades: a place of torment located in the heart of the earth – Isa. 14:9) – where they must await their final judgment and sentencing – (Rev. 20:11-15). After the Great White Throne Judgment, they will be cast into the lake of fire, where they will suffer torment for eternity.

At death, the saints are immediately transported into the presence of God (2 Cor. 5:8), where they too, await their final judgment at the “Judgment (Bema) Seat of Christ” – (Romans 14:10).

The term “Bema Seat” was borrowed from the Olympic games of the ancient world. The “Bema” was a high, elevated seat upon which the judge of the contest sat. After all of the races were run, the participants would assemble before the “Bema Seat” to receive their rewards. Thus, the “Bema” Seat of Christ is not a judgment of the believer’s sins. Rather, it is a judgment of the believer’s works to determine his rewards in eternity – (1 Cor. 3:8-15).

- **Redeemed Man** – When a man accepts Jesus, he becomes a “new creature” in Christ. Things of the old life pass away, and in his spirit, all things become new. In that instant, spiritually speaking, he becomes a partaker of the Divine Nature, and becomes a child of God.

In the New Birth, only one part of man is changed – his spirit. His soul and his body, remain unchanged. From that point, man is commanded to do something with his mind and his body. The mind is to be renewed by the Word, and the flesh is to be presented as a living sacrifice to God in daily (moment-by-moment) obedience to His Word.

- **Mankind’s Ultimate Worth** – The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man. Therefore, every person of every race, color, or creed possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

IV. Article Four - SALVATION

We believe that men are saved solely through faith in God’s Grace, as displayed in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Salvation is a Grace-Gift of God, not the result of human works. This salvation is appropriated by believing that God raised Jesus from the dead, and by receiving (and confessing openly) the Lordship of Jesus Christ. (Romans 3:24; 10:8-10). In that moment, a man is born-again.

- **Salvation Is Through Christ Alone** – We believe that, due to universal death through sin, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he has been born again. No degree of reformation (however great), no attainments in morality (however high), no culture (however attractive), no baptism or other ordinance (however administered), can help the sinner to take even one step toward heaven. A new nature imparted from above is absolutely essential to salvation, and only those thus saved are children of God.

We believe, also, that our redemption has been accomplished solely by the Blood of Jesus Christ, who was made to be sin and was made a curse for us, dying in our room and stead; and that no feeling, no good resolutions, no sincere efforts, and no

submission to the rules and regulations of any church, can add in the very least degree to the value of the Blood, or to the merit of the finished work of Christ. The new birth is imparted through faith in Jesus Christ, and no other acts, such as baptism, prayer, or faithful service, are to be added to believing, as a condition of salvation.

We believe that when an unregenerate person exercises faith in Christ, he passes immediately out of spiritual death into spiritual life, and from the old creation into the new; being justified from all things, accepted before the Father just as Christ is accepted, loved as Christ is loved, having his place and portion as linked to Him and one with Him forever. Though the saved one may have occasion to grow in the realization of his blessings and to know a fuller measure of divine power through the yielding of his life more fully to God, he is, as soon as he is saved, in possession of every spiritual blessing and absolutely complete in Christ.

- **Evidences of Salvation** – The inward evidence of salvation, to the believer, is the direct witness of the Holy Spirit – (Romans 8:16). The outward evidence to all men is a life of true holiness and love – (1 John 3:23; John 13:35). Although works are not the means by which salvation is received, they are evidence of one's faith, and will determine one's rewards in eternity – (Ro. 10:9-10; 14:10-12; 2 Cor. 5:10; Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5-7; James 2:18). Believers should seek to live a Spirit-filled life of separation from the world, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, as an expression of their Christian faith.
- **Stages of Salvation** – Salvation takes place in three stages, eventually covering the entire spectrum of human existence. A Christian's spirit *was saved* (past tense) the moment he received Christ – (2 Cor. 5:17). His soul is in the process of *being saved* (present tense) as his mind is renewed in the Word of God – (James 1:21), and his body *will be saved* (future tense) at the appearing of Christ for His Church – (Romans 8:23).

Thus, the spirit has been saved (past tense) from the *penalty* of sin. The soul is being saved (present tense) from the *power* of sin. And, the body will be saved (future tense) from the very *presence* of sin.

- **The Scope of Salvation** – Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. In the broadest sense, salvation includes repentance, regeneration, justification, propitiation, sanctification and glorification.

Repentance – is an inward change of mind, resulting in an outward change of direction. It, of necessity, must include a genuine turning from sin toward God and a commitment of the entire personality to Him.

Regeneration – is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It consists of the miracle of a changed heart, wrought by the Holy Spirit as the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Justification – is the Sovereign act of God, whereby He declares as "righteous" the believing sinner, while he is still in a sinning state. ("Righteousness" means "right standing with God". It includes the ability to stand in the presence of the Father, without a sense of guilt or inferiority, as though sin had never existed.)

Propitiation – is the work of Christ that satisfies all of the claims of Divine justice – releasing God's mercy so that God is free to act on the behalf of sinful man.

Sanctification – does not refer to "improvement in practical holiness", for both God and Jesus are spoken of as being "sanctified". Nor, does sanctification refer to a state of holiness in which it is impossible for the believer to sin. In its basic usage,

sanctification means “to set apart”. For the believer, there are three stages of sanctification: Positional – (2 Cor. 6:11; 1 Cor. 1:2; Heb. 10:10, 1 Cor. 1:30), Experiential – (Ro. 12:1; Ro. 6:13); and Ultimate – (Jude 25).

Glorification – is the culmination of salvation and refers to the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

- **Divine Healing** – The Greek word for Salvation (sozo) has a five-fold meaning: Deliverance, safety, preservation, healing and soundness. Concerning Divine healing, we believe that sickness and disease came upon the human family as a result of Adam’s sin. Thus, the devil is the author of sickness and disease, and not God.

We believe that physical healing is part and parcel of the redemptive work of Christ (Isaiah 53:4-5, 1 Peter 2:24). Therefore, healing belongs to all believers. We further believe that it is always God’s will to heal – (Matt. 4:23-24; 9:35; 12:15; 14:36; Luke 4:40; 6:19; 9:11). However, the individual’s faith (among other things) is involved in the reception of healing, and according to the individual’s faith, he shall receive, or be kept from receiving.

Concerning tragedy, sickness, misfortune and death – Not every sickness or misfortune comes as the result of personal sin. Many times, there is a *natural* cause. A person may have been in the wrong place at the wrong time, and contracted a disease – or, sickness may come as the result of a satanic attack.

Concerning the blind man in John 9, the disciples asked, “Who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?” (v. 2). Jesus responded, “Neither this man sinned, nor his parents” (v. 3). The Message translation reads: “You’re asking the wrong question. You’re looking for someone to blame. There is no such cause-effect here. Look instead for what God can do”.

Thus, we conclude: Provision was made in the Atonement for Physical Healing, and we should always encourage the sick to believe and receive their healing. However, the afflicted (or those who have suffered a significant loss) should not be made to feel that they are somehow to blame for the situation, or that it is their lack of faith that has kept them from receiving, (thus adding to their suffering). As fellow Christians, we ought to bear one another’s burdens. We must stay positive and encouraging in all situations, while at the same time challenging one another to believe God.

- **Pre-Destination** – We reject the extreme view of Predestination – (the belief that God has pre-determined who will be saved and who will be lost according to the counsel of His Own Will). Rather, we hold to the concept of man’s free moral agency (free-will).

We believe that Calvary’s sacrifice has reached to all men (2 Cor. 5:14; 1 Timothy 2:6; 1 Timothy 4:10; John 3:16; Rev. 22:17), and each individual must decide for himself, where he will spend eternity. The Scriptures that speak of “predestination” reveal that God’s foreknowledge was the foundation of His predestination – (Romans 8:29; 1 Peter 1:2). In eternity past, God looked down the corridors of time, and recognized each individual’s choice. On the basis of *their* choice, God made *His* choice.

V. Article Five – ANGELS AND DEMONS

We believe that God, in eternity past, created an innumerable company of sinless, spiritual beings, known as angels. We further acknowledge that Lucifer (the anointed cherub) led a sinful rebellion, thereby becoming the fallen being known as "Satan".

A great company of the angels followed Lucifer in his moral fall, some of which are active today as Satan's agents and associates (in the fulfillment of his unholy purposes), while others are "reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day" (Isa. 14:12–17; Ezek. 28:11–19; 1 Tim. 3:6; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6).

We understand that Satan was defeated at the Cross, (though not then executed), and that he, a usurper, now rules as the "god of this world" (2 Cor. 4:4). At the Second Coming of Christ, Satan will be bound and cast into the abyss for a thousand years. After the thousand years, he will be loosed for a little season and then "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone," where he "shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever" (Col. 2:15; Rev. 20:1–3, 10).

We believe that a great company of angels kept their holy estate and are presently sent forth as ministering spirits to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation – (Luke 15:10; Eph. 1:21; Heb. 1:14; Rev. 7:12).

VI. Article Six – THE CHURCH AND ITS ORDINANCES

We believe that all who are born again, and thus united to Christ are members of the Universal Church, which is the Body and Bride of Christ. This Body, which began at Pentecost, is completely distinct from the Israel of the Old Testament. We believe that all believers, having become members one of another, are under solemn duty to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, rising above all sectarian differences, and loving one another with a pure heart fervently – (Matt. 16:16–18; Acts 2:42–47; Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 12:12–27; Eph. 1:20–23; 4:3–10; Col. 3:14–15).

Christian baptism refers to the full immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This act is a public declaration to the world that a believer has died with Christ, and has risen with him to walk a life of holiness and love.

Water baptism is a testimony to the believer's faith in the bodily resurrection of Christ, and of the future resurrection of the dead, and is in no way a means of receiving salvation. It is an outward testimony of an already completed inward work – (Matt. 28:19; Acts 10:47-48; Romans 6:4). As an organization, VCI does not practice infant baptism.

The Lord's Supper symbolizes and memorializes the death of the Christ – and, at the same time – anticipates His Second Coming (1 Cor. 11:24-30). The bread and juice (wine) are merely symbols of the body and blood of Christ. No transubstantiation occurs in the communion process.

VII. Article Seven – ESCHATOLOGY

Recognizing that there are different eschatological viewpoints within the Body of Christ, (and not wishing to limit our instructors to any one eschatological belief system), we simply make this statement: God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. At the appointed time, Jesus Christ will appear to gather His saints unto Himself – (1 Cor. 15:51; 1 Thess. 4:16-17; 2 Thess. 2:1), and will return to this earth to set up His Millennial Kingdom.

We believe that the period of great tribulation in the earth, will be climaxed by the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth as He went, in person on the clouds of heaven, and with power and great glory to introduce the millennial age, to bind Satan and place him in the abyss, to lift the curse which now rests upon the whole creation, to restore Israel to her own land and to give her the realization of God's covenant promises, and to bring the whole world to the knowledge of God – (Deut. 30:1–10; Isa. 11:9; Ezek. 37:21–28; Matt. 24:15–25:46; Acts 15:16–17; Rom. 8:19–23; 11:25–27; 1 Tim. 4:1–3; 2 Tim. 3:1–5; Rev. 20:1–3). After the Millennium, there will be a new heaven and a new earth (Rev. 21:1-4).