

**Personal Doctrinal Statement**

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**A Doctrinal Statement  
Submitted to Dr. Wayne Grudem  
Phoenix Seminary  
Scottsdale, Arizona**

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**In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for  
TH 503**

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**by  
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I believe the Holy Spirit manifests God's active presence in the world, and especially the Church. The Holy Spirit empowers for service, sanctifies believers, enlightens minds to Truth, and gives prophecy. The Holy Spirit unifies His Church. Men are convicted by sin, drawing unbelievers to salvation, and believers to holiness, all by the power of the Holy Spirit (John 16:8). The Holy Spirit assures believers of their salvation, testifying of God's presence in their lives (Romans 8:16).

I believe God gives common grace to all mankind, by giving life, limiting evil, granting skills to men and women, and limiting all the effects of the fall from being immediate and fatal.

I do not believe Scripture says that God, as a loving Father, before creation, looked into time and saw his beloved children in a fatal situation and, in His good pleasure, decided to rescue some of them, and mournfully also decided to not rescue the others. I believe that God elected before the foundations of the world to send Christ as God's promised Messiah (John 4:25-26) to the Jewish people to save them and the whole world (Eph. 3:6,11) from their spiritual captivity to Satan, sin, and death (Luke 1:69-79), which He completed at the cross (I Peter 2:24; Colossians 2:14). His payment of death, which He did not owe (Hebrew 4:15; I Peter 2:22; Isaiah 53:9), He freely offers to every human (I John 2:2; II Peter 2:1; Rom 5:18; II Thess. 2:10-12; John 3:16; I Tim 2:4-6; Titus 2:11-15; 3:1-5; I Peter 3:18; II Peter 3:9; Hebrews 10:10), that all who confess their sin and debt (I John 1:9; Matthew 10:32; Leviticus 26:40-42), turn from their wicked ways (II Chronicles 7:14), give up their own efforts for righteousness (Gal. 5:4-6), and instead trust (John 3:16) in His gift (Ephesians 2:8-10), would be given His righteousness before God (II Cor. 5:21; Rom. 3:20-30), by His grace (Eph. 2:4-5), resulting in eternal life (John 3:16; Romans

6:23). Christ's death satisfies God's just requirements for sin (Colossians 2:14), allowing God to be just and a the loving Justifier of all who would trust Christ for salvation (Rom 3:25-26); God can and does legally declare the debt of a believer paid and Christ's righteousness imputed to them. At this time of conversion, believers receive the Holy Spirit in their life, Who manifests Himself at differing degrees throughout the life of the believer. At conversion believers also are adopted as Children of God (Galatians 4:5; Romans 8:15) which will manifest in glorified bodies at the end of this age (Romans 8:23). Christ came to internalize God's law for His people, writing it on their hearts (Jer. 31:33; Hebrews 8:7-13; II Cor. 3:3-8), by His example (I Peter 2:21) in life and death (John 12:32). Sanctification is the process where the believer turns more and more from their sin and lets Christ's example become more and more the pattern of their life. Christ's victory for the believer is won (Colossians 2:15), its effects have begun and continue to grow while the believer is in this life (II Cor. 2:14), and will be manifest completely on His return at the end of the age (I Cor. 15:52-57).

I believe that when believers die, they are immediately in a state of bliss in the presence of God (Phil. 1:23; Luke 23:43; 2 Cor. 5:8), and when unbelievers die, they are immediately in a state of torment apart from the presence of God (Heb. 9:27; Luke 16:24-26). Those who have trusted in Christ, in this life, for salvation have been united with Him in His death, freeing them from bondage to sin (Romans 6:1-14; Colossians 3:3), and also have been united with Him in His life, looking forward to a glorified body like His (Romans 6:5; I John 3:2; Colossians 3:4).

I believe that the Church is the community of all true believers for all time. The Church is local

and universal. Locally, a true Church will rightly teach the Gospel and rightly administer Baptism and the Lord's Supper. True local Churches will have greater or lesser purity from wrong doctrine and conduct, and toward God's revealed purpose for the Church. God's purpose and sanction for the Church is to adore God, nurture believers, evangelize unbelievers, carry on spiritual warfare, and exercise Church discipline (Matthew 18:15-16; I Timothy 5:19-21). As local Churches move farther from rightly fulfilling their purpose, there may come a point where more pure Churches need to separate themselves, to some degree, breaking cherished unity of the Body of Christ. The goal of such a separation should always be to see the less pure Church repent and return to their ordained purpose. Where the Church exercises Spiritual authority, it should never cross into the role of the State, and "take up the sword" to achieve its purpose. Church offices are positions in a Church filled by individuals who are publicly recognized to perform specific functions for the benefit of the entire Church. These offices include that of overseer/governor (sometime called an Elder, Pastor, or Bishop, in the New Testament) and if spoken of in plurality in the New Testament. The next office is the granting of responsibility for a ministry, called a Deacon in the New Testament (I Timothy 3:8-13). Some qualifications for one to be trusted with an office in the Church are outlined in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1. Women are broadly restricted from roles of authority in the Church (I Timothy 2:12-14), but are encouraged to hold roles of responsible service. Church government should try to follow the pattern set forth in the New Testament as close as possible. A Church should never establish policies for government which would make it difficult to remove those from position who cause the local Church to become less pure (I Timothy 5:19).

In the Church, there are special activities which God has chosen as special means of His grace.

These include the special institutions of Baptism and The Lord's Supper, but also are seen in the activities of performing the God-ordained functions of the Church, including evangelism, worship, teaching God's Word, and others. Baptism is commanded by Jesus for all believers to be done at the time of conversion demonstrating to the participant and witnesses, with a physical symbol of burial and resurrection, the union of the participant with Christ in death and newness of life (Romans 6:4). The Lord's Supper is commanded by Jesus for all believers as often as they eat and drink bread and wine together, as a symbolic remembrance of His broken Body and spilled Blood for them (I Corinthians 11:25-26). God has given each member of the Church a gift or gifts specially empowered by The Holy Spirit to use in service to edify the whole (I Corinthians 7:7; ch. 12).

I believe in the sudden, physical return of Jesus to earth (1 Thessalonians. 4:16). I believe He will then reign here for a relatively long period, signified in Scripture by 1000 years (Revelation 20:1-10). After this reign, the great Day of Final Judgment will see all mankind separated between believers and unbelievers (Matthew 25:31-46). The latter will be cast into everlasting conscious punishment, and former will be judged for rewards and authority in Heaven (I Corinthians 3:11-15). I believe all who believe in Jesus Christ for salvation are now considered the Israel of God (Galatians 6:16; Romans 9:6; Hebrews 8:10-13; Ephesians 2:12-22 (esp. 19)).