

The Doctrine of God (#1)

1. Who is God: and what is He Like?

- **God is the Sovereign-Eternal Creator** (the only God who is):
He is spirit, self-existing, unchanging, infinitely great & personal
(vs9-11; Neh 9:6; Jn 4:24; 5:26; Mal 3:6; Ps 145:3; Ps 139; 1Jn 1)
- **God is one God who is three Persons:** Father, Son, & Holy Spirit
(v9; Dt 6:4; Mt 3:16ff; 28:19)
- **God is holy:** good, faithful, perfect, & righteous in all His ways
(vs3,13; Lev 19:2; Ps 34:8; 1Co 1:9; 10:13ff; Heb 3:6; Jm 1:17)
- **God is light:** He is pure, excellent, beautiful, glorious & knowable
(1Jn 1:5; Ps 150:2; 27:4; Ex 15:11; Jer 9:23f)
- **God is love:** He is Father to the fatherless, a protector of widows,
who is merciful, gracious & patient toward sinners
(v13; 1Jn 4:7ff; Ps 68:6f; Ex 34:6)
- **God is King:** He is LORD, Judge of all the earth, Savior of the
world, and jealous for His own glory
(Ps 47:6ff; Gen 18:25; 1Th 4:10; Ex 34:14)

2. What does God Do?

- **God is fulfilling His own plans & purpose:** for His own glory
(vs10-13; cf. Rom 1:1-6; 11:28ff)
- **God is redeeming a people for Himself:**
who are called by His Name (vs12-13; Eph 1:3ff; Is 43:6f)
- **God executes righteous judgment:**
and He will make all things new (v8; Rev 20:11ff; 21:5)

3. A Summary Statement (EFCA Statement of Faith #1): The Doctrine of God

We believe in one God, Creator of all things, holy, infinitely perfect, and eternally existing in a loving unity of three equally divine Persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Having limitless knowledge and sovereign power, God has graciously purposed from eternity to redeem a people for Himself and to make all things new for His own glory.

4. How then shall “We” Live?

- **Love & Worship God:** repenting of idolatry & unbelief
(vs1-8; Dt 6:4ff)
- **Embrace Trinitarian Theology:** & proclaim the God-glorifying
gospel (cf. 2Co 13:14; Jn 3:35; 5:20; Ro 16:25ff)
- **Delight ourselves in the Lord:** for our joy & God’s glory
(v13; Ps 37:4)

The Doctrine of the Bible – Scripture (#2)

1. What is Scripture?

- **Scripture is the God-breathed written Word of God:**
Inspired (v16; 2Pe 1:19ff); inerrant (Jn 17:17; Eph 1:13; Col 1:5; 2Ti 2:15) & infallible (Is 55:10f; Ro 1:16; 1Pe 1:22ff)
- **Scripture is God’s written revelation to us:** regarding Himself (Ex 3; Is 46; Jn 1), His will (Ps 1; 19; Ro 12-15), salvation history (Ac 2; 7; 13; Ro 9-11) the gospel (Jn 20:30f; 2Ti 3:14ff; 1Pe 1:10ff)
- **Scripture is God’s living & sufficient Word:**
It is its own interpreter & our ultimate authority (vs14f; Heb 4:12; Ps 19; Dt 1-3; Ps 105; Mt 1-2; Ro 4:23f; Mt 7:24ff)
- **Scripture is our spiritual food:** and a light for our path (Mt 4:4; Ps 119:105)

2. How was Scripture Written?

- **Scripture was written by humans as God spoke through them:**
Initiating & inspiring what they wrote (Jer 1:1; Ezk 1:1; 2Pe 1:20)
- **Scripture was written thru the author’s personal experience:**
Divine encounters included (Ps 32; Jn 21:24ff; 2Pe 1:16ff; Is 6:1ff; Lk 1:26ff; 2Co 12; Rev 1)
- **Scripture was written with truthfulness & historical accuracy:**
and in spite of persecution (Lk 1:1-4; Mk 16; Ac 27; Jer 36; 2Ti 2:8f)
- **Scripture was written by multiple authors:**
Over a long period of time and with a unifying message (Lk 24:27; Ro 15:4-7; Is 52-53; Zec 9-14; Gal 3; Ro 9-11; Rev 22)

→ What should be considered Scripture? For OT: no disputes about what the OT Scriptures were in NT days. For Apocrypha: does not claim to be Scripture; sometimes contradicts it. For NT: written by apostle/associate, agrees w/ OT/gospel, accepted by early church?

→ Why don’t we add to Scripture anymore? Two primary reasons Scripture was written or added to: 1) God did a new act in salvation history (e.g. promise to Abraham; anointed David king); 2) God gave new revelation. With the coming of Christ, God’s revelation is complete & His final act of salvation history has begun (what is still to take place has been foretold & is connected to His 1st coming).

3. A Summary Statement (EFCA Statement of Faith #2): The Doctrine of The Bible (Scripture)

We believe that God has spoken in the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, through the words of human authors. As the verbally inspired Word of God, the Bible is without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for salvation, and the ultimate authority by which every realm of human knowledge and endeavor should be judged. Therefore, it is to be believed in all that it teaches, obeyed in all that it requires, and trusted in all that it promises.

4. How then shall “We” live?

- **Feed upon Scripture in our daily devotions:**
to know, love & follow Jesus (Col 3:16; Jn 8:31ff; Mt 7:24ff)
- **Preach & teach the Word:** & encourage one another with Scripture (2Ti 4; 3:10ff; Rom 15:4-7; Ac 14:22; 20:1; Heb 10:25)
- **Believe, trust & obey God’s Word:**
Praying & singing the Scriptures until Jesus returns (Col 1:9ff; Eph 1:15ff; 3:14ff; Ps 119:105; Col 3:16ff)

The Doctrine of the Human Condition – Man & Sin (#3)

1. What does it mean to be Human? (origin, likeness, purpose)

- **God created us in His image:** & blessed us to be His people for His eternal glory (vs26ff; Ex 19; Jn 17; Eph 2-3; 1Pe 2:9f; Rev 21-22)
 - we our relational (like our Triune God): spiritual beings created with a body, to live here on earth, in fellowship with God/one another
 - we our rational: able to reason/morally accountable to our Creator
 - we represent God’s rule: given dominion over creation (care for it)
 - we reflect God’s glory: thru holiness, beauty, creativity, etc.
- **God created Man – Male & Female:** & commanded us to multiply
 - Equality: men & women are equal and complementary in nature
 - Companionship (marriage, sex, family): for our good & procreation; foundational to/blessing for society; reflective of the gospel/church
 - Historical & Cultural Gospel Relevance:
Adam/Eve are historical; all cultures (nations/tribes) are equal

2. What is Sin: and where did it come from? (Gen 3:1ff)

- **Satan (serpent) & Demons:** (Rev 12; 1Ti 3:6; 2Pe 2:4; Mt 4:1ff; 2Co 4:4; Eph 6:10ff; Ac 26:18; cf. Isa 14:12ff; Ezk 28:11ff)
- **the Fall of Man:** (our sin; God’s judgment & God’s grace)
 - Serpent deceives the woman: she & Adam (who was with her) sin
 - Initial consequences: innocence lost, shame, fear, blame
 - God curses the serpent (Christ’s victory/redemption foreshadowed)
 - God punishes the woman (pain in child bearing/in rel. w/ husband)
 - God punishes Adam: listened to his wife/disobeyed God (toil/death)
 - God extends grace: to Eve & Adam (mother all the living; clothed)
 - God banishes man: from the garden (His presence/tree of life)
- **Theology & Nature of Sin** (*adapted from Kevin J. Vanhoozer)
 - *Symbols/metaphors: error, wandering, sickness, debt
 - *Sin is intensely Spiritual: a power hostile toward God; breaking of God’s law; missing the mark; foolish, ignorant, dangerous living; a failure to reflect the image of God (fallen short of God’s glory)

- In union with Adam, we’re sinners by nature & choice: in bondage to our idolatry, pride, unbelief, rebellion, immorality, oppression, racism, bitterness, murder, jealousy, not living by faith, self-glory
- Total Depravity: Sin has corrupted all aspects of our humanity (all of God’s very good creation is also defiled by & suffering under sin). Only by faith in Christ can we be rescued from God’s wrath, reconciled with God & His people; and renewed in God’s image (& God promises to make all things new for His glory).

3. A Summary Statement (EFCA Statement of Faith #3): The Doctrine of the Human Condition (Man & Sin)

We believe that God created Adam and Eve in His image, but they sinned when tempted by Satan. In union with Adam, human beings are sinners by nature and by choice, alienated from God, and under His wrath. Only through God’s saving work in Jesus Christ can we be rescued, reconciled and renewed.

4. How then shall “We” live?

- **Be on Guard against temptation, sin & the evil one** (Mt 4:1ff)
 - Confess & repent of our sins: don’t blame others
 - Follow Christ’s example: depend on Spirit’s power, word & prayer
- **Live Healthy, pray for healing & prepare to die** (3Jn v2; Jm 5:13ff; 2Ki 20:1)
- **Represent God’s rule & reflect His glory** (Ge 1:26ff; Mt 5:13-16) thru our Christlike relationships with God & one another
 - as Men: obey God’s word & protect/build up women (Eph 5:25ff) (do not neglect, abuse or exploit women/wives or anyone else)
 - as Women: set your hearts on God & honor men (1Pe 3:1ff) (do not dominate, control or seduce men/husbands or anyone else)
 - in Culture & Government: as a prophetic-minority, pray for/obey our leaders; be humble/cross-cultural; serve/defend the oppressed (Ac 17:16ff; 1Ti 2:1f; Ti 3:1ff; 1Pe 2-3; 1Co 9:19ff; Is 58:6ff)
 - as the Church: embrace God’s plan for the family & preach the gospel (proclaim the good news of adoption; welcome sinners into the family of God/local church; and teach/obey biblical marriage) (Ge 1:26ff; 2:1ff; Dt 6:4ff; Eph 5:21-6:4; 2Ti 4:1ff; Ro 14:1-15:13)

The Doctrine of Jesus Christ (#4)

1. Who is Jesus Christ?

• He is Lord of Creation (vs15-17)

- the image of the invisible God (v15): God the Son; the I am (Jn 14:9; Heb 1:1ff; Jn 6:35; 8:12,58; 10:9-14; 13:13; 14:6; 15:1-15)
- firstborn of all creation (v15): Son of God; Word became flesh; born of a Virgin (Mk 1:1; Jn 1:14; 3:16; Mt 1:18ff)
- in whom, thru whom, & for whom all things were created (v16): preeminent (Jn 1:1-3)/this point is emphasized in v18 (see below)
- He is before all things (v17): pre-existing (Jn 1:1; Jn 8:58)
- in Him all things hold together (v17): universal power (Heb 1:3)

• He is Lord of Salvation (vs18-20)

- He's the head of the body (v18): Shepherd of His sheep; Bridegroom (Jn 10:1ff; Heb 13:20; Mt 9:15; Eph 5:22ff; Rev 19:7)
- He is the beginning (v18): making all things new (Rev 21:5) the Kingdom is inaugurated (Mt 4:17) & redemption has begun (Eph 1:7; Jn 3:17) because Israel's Messiah has come (2Sa 7:12ff; Is 9:6-7; Mt 1:1ff; 2:2; 27:37,42; Ro 11:25-27)
- He is the firstborn from the dead (v18; cf. Mt 27:51-53): the Resurrection & the life (Jn 11:25); the Last Adam (1Co 15:45)
- He is preeminent (v18) the Son of Man who has all authority (Dan 7:13f; Mt 25:31; 28:16)
- in Him the fullness of God dwells (v19) He is fully God & Man (Jn 1:14; Mt 1:18ff; Lk 3:23ff; Heb 1:3; 2:14ff); the Temple (Jn 1:14; Rev 21:22); the Light of the world (Jn 1:5; 8:12)
- all things are reconciled thru & for Him (v20): Crucified-Savior & Resurrected-Lord (Mt 27-28; Ac 1:3; 2:22ff); Ascended-High Priest & Conquering-King (Ac 1:11ff; Heb 4:14ff; 9:24ff; Rev 1:5; 19:11ff)

• He is the Preeminent One (vs15-20)

- in Him: all things were created & the fullness of God dwells
- thru Him: all things were created & all things will be reconciled
- for Him: all things were created & all things will be reconciled

2. What did Jesus do and how did He live?

- **He Glorified His Father: accomplishing all the work that God gave Him to do** (while on earth). Jesus: was Sent by the Father to be the Savior of the world (1Jn 4:14); Fulfilled Scripture as Israel's Messiah (Mt 1-2); Personified & inaugurated the kingdom (Mt 4:17; 9:35; Mk 4); Revealed the Father & the way of salvation (Mt 11:27; Jn 8:12); Conquered sin, Satan, the world, death/hell, providing the way of salvation thru His death/resurrection (Jn 19-21; Ac 2:22ff; Col 1:13f); Reigns/is working now (Ac 1:1; Rev 1:5) & will return to hand the kingdom over to the Father, save those waiting for Him & judge the living and the dead (1Co 15:24ff; Heb 9:28; Rev 19-22).
- **He Lived a Righteous (truly human) Life: fulfilling God's law & never sinning.** Jesus: was Protected by God the Father & trusted His Father (Jn 7:30; Lk 23:46); was in His Father's house & obeyed His parents (Lk 2:49ff); was Baptized in water & by the Spirit (Mt 3:13ff); was a Man of the word & prayer & faithful in the wilderness & thru temptation (Mt 4:1ff; Jn 17; Mk 14:32ff); Worked hard & paid His taxes (Mk 6:31ff; Mt 17:25ff); was Loved by the Father & loved the Father (Jn 3:35; 14:31); Loved all people but was not a people pleaser (Mk 2:15ff; 10:21; 12:14; Jn 7:18); Marveled at people of faith (Lk 7:9); Had no place to lay His head (Mt 8:20); Journeyed toward Jerusalem/the cross (Lk 9:51; Mk 8:31ff); was Betrayed & abandoned by His friends, falsely accused, imprisoned, convicted, tortured, publicly humiliated & wrongfully sentenced to death (Mk 14-15); Laid down His life willing/obedient to death on a cross (Jn 18-19); was Raised from the dead/vindicated by the Father will be glorified by all nations (Lk 24; Ro 1:1ff; Eph 1:20; Rev 7:9ff).

3. A Summary Statement (EFCA Statement of Faith #4): The Doctrine of Jesus Christ

We believe that Jesus Christ is God incarnate, fully God and fully man, one Person in two natures. Jesus-Israel's promised Messiah-was conceived through the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived a sinless life, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father as our High Priest and Advocate.

4. How then shall "We" live?

- Are you in the midst of a storm, or are you ready if one comes? Call on Jesus' mighty power & obey His word (Mk 4:35ff)
- Do you have a hero in life? Fix your eyes on Jesus (Heb 11-12)

The Doctrine of the Work of Christ (#5) (the Cross & the Resurrection)

1. Why the Cross?

- **because we are sinners** (vs6-10): although loved by God, we are powerless, ungodly enemies of God, subject to His wrath
- **because of God’s righteousness** (vs10-11; Ro 3:21ff): only thru Christ can we be saved/righteous
 - Atonement: being reconciled (at one) with God (Lev 16:6ff)
 - ▶ Propitiation: wrath appeased; turned to favor (v9; Ro 3:25)
 - ▶ Justification: declared righteous (vs1,9; Ro 3:21ff)
 - Christ: our Representative & Substitute
 - ▶ Our union with Christ: He represents us as the last Adam (Ro 5:12ff); our High priest (Heb 2:17ff); Israel’s King (Dt 17:15; Mt 1:21; 27:37)
 - ▶ Penal substitution: He pays our penalty & dies as our substitute in our place (Gal 3:13; 1Pe 3:18)
- **because of God’s love & for His glory** (vs6-8; Ro 1:5f; 16:25ff): Christ died for us (the ungodly, sinners)

2. Does the Resurrection Matter?

- **Yes – regarding God & His Gospel** (5:10)
 - God’s divine power & faithfulness (Jn 11:25; Ac 2:23f; Mk 8:31): death could not hold Him (God) down & He said He would rise

- the Father’s vindication of His son (Ro 1:4; Php 2:8f): By raising Him from the dead, God declares Christ righteous and that His death satisfied God’s wrath & paid our penalty
- God’s triumph over evil & death (1Co 15:20ff): Christ reigns now & is coming back

- **Yes – regarding our Salvation** (v10)

- to be born again/creation (1Pe 1:3; 2Co 5:17): our new life flows out of Christ
- to be empowered (1Pe 1:5ff; Ac 1:8): for godliness, witnessing & perseverance
- to have hope (1Pe 1:3ff): for life after death (eternal life in God’s eternal kingdom)

3. A Summary Statement (EFCA Statement of Faith #5): The Doctrine of the Work of Christ

We believe that Jesus Christ, as our representative and substitute, shed His blood on the cross as the perfect, all-sufficient sacrifice for our sins. His atoning death and victorious resurrection constitute the only ground for salvation.

4. How then shall “We” live?

- **Come to Jesus if you’re thirsty or weary**: for cleansing, healing & filling (Jn 7:37; 10:10; Rev 22:17; Mt 4:23ff; 11:28; Ti 3:4ff; Jm 5:13ff)
- **Embrace the way of the cross & preach the gospel**: in the love, joy & power of the Resurrected-Christ (1Pe 1:3ff; Ro 5:3-5)

The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit (#6)

1. Who is the Holy Spirit?

- **He is a Divine Person:** the Spirit of God, of the LORD, of Christ (Jn 16:13; Ge 1:2, 26; Is 11:2; Ro 8:9; Mt 28:19; Ac 5:3f; 2Co 13:14)
→ Should we worship the Holy Spirit? Yes –in a Trinitarian way (Scripture’s emphasis: worship in/by the Spirit – Jn 4:23; Php 3:3)
- **He is the Spirit of Truth** (Jn 16:13; Jn 14:17; 15:26)
- **He is the Helper** (Advocate, Counselor, Intercessor): a legal counselor (helping presence) who comes along side to intercede, encourage & exhort (Jn 7:39; 14:16; 16:7; Jer 31:31ff)
- **He is God’s gift who we can receive** (Ac 2:38; Jn 7:39; Joel 2:28ff): the promised Spirit who characterizes life in the kingdom age
→ Should I be baptized in the Spirit? (Mk 1:8; 1Co 12:13)
Yes – that happens when you believe in Christ.

2. What does the Holy Spirit Do?

- **He manifests God’s holy presence for God’s glory** (Ex 40:34; Is 6:1ff; 11:2ff; Ezk 36:22ff; Mt 3:16; Ac 2:1ff)
- **He reveals God’s word** (2Pe 1:21; Ac 1:16; Jn 14:26; 2Ti 3:16)
- **He glorifies Jesus Christ** (Jn 16:14)
→ in Evangelism: the Spirit anoints our gospel proclamation, reveals Christ & convicts the world (Ac 1:8; 1Co 1-2; 2Co 3-4; Jn 16:8-11)
→ thru Conversion: the Spirit regenerates sinners, and in Him we are baptized into Christ & experience adoption into God’s family (Jn 1:12; 3:1ff; Ti 3:5; 1Co 12:13; Ro 6:3; 8:14ff; Gal 4:6; Eph 1:4f)
→ in Discipleship: the Spirit indwells believers – He illuminates, leads, sanctifies, equips, empowers, assures, intercedes, unifies the body, & speaks to the churches (Ro 8:9; Eph 2:22; Jm 4:5; 1Co 2:12ff; 1Pe 1:2; Gal 5:16ff; 1Co 12; Eph 4-5; 1Jn 4:13; Ro 8; Rev 2-3)
→ unto Glorification: the Spirit is a deposit guaranteeing our eternal inheritance (Eph 1:14; 2Co 1:22; Ro 8:23)

3. A Summary Statement (EFCA Statement of Faith #6): The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit, in all that He does, glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. He convicts the world of its guilt. He regenerates sinners, and in Him they are baptized into union with Christ and adopted as heirs in the family of God. He also indwells, illuminates, guides, equips and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service.

4. How then shall “We” live? (Glorifying Jesus thru the Spirit)

- **Relationships:** (Eph 5:18; 4:3; Php 2:1ff; Ro 15:5-7)
be filled with the Spirit to follow Jesus & be united as one body
- **Character-Lifestyle:** walk by the Spirit to bear the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:16ff; Jn 15:1ff)
- **Service:** use our spiritual gifts to build up the church (1Pe 4:10-11; 1Co 12-14; Ro 12:4ff)
- **Witness:** (Ac 1:8; Ac 4:13, 31)
share Christ thru the Spirit’s power to save the lost & glorify God

The Doctrine of the Church (#7)

1. Who is the Church?

- **God’s people** (Eph 1:22; cf. Ac 7:38; 15:30):
who He has called-out & gathered together (assembled)
- the universal church: on earth/in heaven (Eph 1:22; 2:5-6; Col 1:18)
- the local church: in a city, house, etc. (1Co 1:2; Rev 2-3; Ro 16:5)
- **Some descriptions of the church**: by God’s grace...
 - we are saints: a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation (Eph 1:1; 1Pe 2:9; cf. Ex 19:1ff)
 - we are God’s family: adopted as sons, brothers/sisters with each other, & heirs of eternal life (Eph 1:5; Ro 4:16; 8:23ff; Heb 2:11ff)
 - we are believers in Christ: saved by God’s grace thru faith in Christ alone (Eph 1:13; 2:8)
 - we are the body of Christ: baptized & united into one body by the Holy Spirit (Eph 1:23; 1Co 12:12f, 27; Ro 15:5f)
 - we are God’s temple: fellow citizens & members of His household (Eph 2:19ff; 1Co 3:16; 2Co 6:16ff; 1Pe 2:5; Heb 11:13ff; Rev 21-22)
 - we are the bride of Christ: who will be ready when Jesus returns (Eph 5:21ff; 2Co 11:2; Isa 54:5; 62:5; Mt 16:18; Rev 19:7)

2. What is the Purpose of the Church?

(Note: other topics such as serving the poor are addressed in Message #8 “Christian Living” because those topics are listed under that doctrinal point)

- **to make disciples**: baptizing, teaching, equipping, & sending (Mt 28:16ff; Eph 4:11ff; Ro 1:16; 1Co 15:1-3; Ac 1:8; 13:1ff; 15:1ff)

- **to shepherd believers in worship/service**: leading & protecting with godly authority & sound doctrine (1Pe 5; Jn 21:15ff; Col 3:16f; Ps 33; Rev 4-5; Mt 26:17ff; 18:17; 1Co 11:23ff; Ac 20:17ff; 2Ti 3-4)
- **to love our brothers & sisters**: caring for each other & our families as we serve others (Eph 4:2; 5:1-6:4; 1Ti 5; 1Jn 4:7ff; 2Ti 3:15)
- **to glorify God in the heavenly realms**: (Eph 3:1-11)
as Christ’s unified-multicultural bride (Eph 2:11ff; Ro 15:5-7)

3. A Summary Statement (EFCA Statement of Faith #7): The Doctrine of the Church

We believe that the true church comprises all who have been justified by God’s grace through faith alone in Christ alone. They are united by the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ, of which He is the Head. The true church is manifest in local churches, whose membership should be composed only of believers. The Lord Jesus mandated two ordinances, baptism and the Lord’s Supper, which visibly and tangibly express the gospel. Though they are not the means of salvation, when celebrated by the church in genuine faith, these ordinances confirm and nourish the believer.

4. How then shall “We” live?

- **Believe & Grow in Christ**: (Eph 1:13; 4:11ff; Ac 2:37ff; 1Co 11:23ff)
be baptized & worship (serve) Him in the fellowship of His church
- **Preach/teach the word**: establishing godly leadership & sending out missionaries (2Ti 3-4; Ti 1:5; 1Pe 5; Mt 18:17; Ac 13; 15)
- **Be a loving-family to each other**: & build up the families in our church (Eph 4:2; 5:2; Jm 2:15; 1Jn 3:16f; 1Ti 5; Eph 5:21-6:4)
- **Build up cross-cultural unity in the church**:
for the glory of God (Eph 2:11ff; 3:1-11; Ro 15:5-7, 22ff; Rev 7:9ff)

The Doctrine of Christian Living (#8)

1. How are the following related:

God’s Grace, Salvation & the Christian life?

- **Election:** God chose to save us

(Ti 1:1; Eph 1:4; 1Th 1:4; 2Th 2:13)

- **Proclamation:** God sent (messengers)– we heard (the gospel)

also God called us to Himself (Ti 1:3; Col 1:5; 2Th 2:14; Ro 10:17)

- **Conversion:** God saved – we believed

→ **Regeneration** (Ti 3:5; Jn 3:1ff): God causes us to be born again

→ **Faith** (Eph 2:8): we are saved by God’s grace thru faith in Jesus

→ **Justification** (Ti 3:7; Gal 2:16): declared righteous when we believe

→ **Adoption** (Ti 3:7; Eph 1:4): adopted into God’s family as His children

→ **New Creation** (2Co 5:17): we become part of the new creation

- **Sanctification:** God sanctifies (sets apart/makes holy) - we obey

(Jn 17:17; 8:31ff; Mt 7:24ff; Eph 5:26; 1Th 5:23)

→ **Eternal Security:** God keeps - we persevere

(Eph 1:14; Jn 10:28; Php 1:6; 1Pe 1:5)

- **Glorification:** God will save us

(God will dwell with us; we will be His people)

2. In light of God’s Grace & Our Sanctification: How shall “we” live?

- **by Repenting of sin: v12**

as God’s kindness leads us to repentance (Ro 2:4)

- **like Jesus did: v12**

a holy life thru the Spirit’s power (2Pe 1:3)

- **by Looking for Christ’s return: v13**

as we are guarded by God’s power thru faith (1Pe 1:5; Eph 6:10ff)

- **as God’s people: v14**

→ Redeemed by Christ & zealous for good works

→ Love God supremely; others sacrificially (Mk 12:29ff; Jn 13 & 15)

→ Serve the poor & oppressed (Isa 58:6ff; Mt 25:31ff; Jm 2)

- **according to the Great Commission: v15** Build up the body of Christ in His authority & with His reassuring presence (Mt 28:16ff)

3. A Summary Statement (EFCA Statement of Faith #8): The Doctrine of Christian Living

We believe that God’s justifying grace must not be separated from His sanctifying power and purpose. God commands us to love Him supremely and others sacrificially, and to live out our faith with care for one another, compassion toward the poor and justice for the oppressed. With God’s Word, the Spirit’s power, and fervent prayer in Christ’s name, we are to combat the spiritual forces of evil. In obedience to Christ’s commission, we are to make disciples among all people, always bearing witness to the gospel in word and deed.

The Doctrine of Christ's Return (#9)

1. What is “Christ's Return” & why is He coming back?

- **God sent His Son: & He will return** (1Jn 4:14; Rev 19:11ff)

- Personal: 1Th 4:16; Ac 1:11
- Bodily: 1Co 15:35ff; cf. Jn 20:27
- Premillennial: see Rev 19 & 20

- **Christ will return for our Salvation: & to usher in His Kingdom**

- to save those who are waiting for Him: Rev 19:1; Heb 9:28; 1Pe 1
- to be united with His bride (church): Rev 19:7; Eph 5:2ff
- to fulfill God's promises to His people: Is 9:6ff; Ge 12; Zep 3:14ff
- to liberate the poor & oppressed: Is 11:4; cf. Rev 18:13
- to defeat & judge His enemies: Rev 19:11ff; 1Co 15:22-26 (Satan, the unrepentant/unbelievers, & death itself)
- to make all things new: Rev 21:5; 11:15 (God dwelling with us in eternal glory in a new heaven & earth)
- **How then shall “we” live?** With sanctifying hope & comfort as we wait for His appearing (Rev 1:3; 2Pe 3:11-13; 1Th 4:14ff; Ti 2:11ff)

2. When will Christ Return?

- **Regarding a Date: no one knows** (Mt 24:36; v27)

- **Regarding the Rapture:** (1Th 4:14ff)

- Post-trib: the rapture is after the Great Tribulation
- Pre-trib: the rapture is before the Great Tribulation
 - Mid-trib: the rapture is in the middle of the Great Tribulation
 - Pre-wrath: rapture is before God's wrath/at end of Great Tribulation

- **Regarding the Millennial Reign:** (Rev 20:1ff)

- Pre-millennial: Christ's return is before the millennial reign
- Amillennial: there is “no separate/future” millennial reign (also called Inaugurated millennial reign: it is now in heaven)
- Post-millennial: Christ's return is after the millennial reign

- **Regarding World Events**

- Before Christ returns there will be Tribulation in this Age: Rev 1:9; Mt 24:6ff; Ac 2:17 (the current age is tribulation/the last days)
- Before Christ returns God's judgment falls on Jerusalem: Mt 24:2ff (in A.D. 70 & at end of age; a prophecy with multiple fulfillments?)
- Before Christ returns there will be Deception, an Increase in Evil, & a Falling away (idolatry, immorality, oppression/poor): Mt 24:11ff
- Before Christ returns there will be a Great Tribulation with global persecution & God's wrath on an idolatrous world: Rev 13-18
- Before Christ returns there will be the Rise of a Final antichrist:
 - many antichrists will come (1Jn 2:18; cf. Rev 13)
 - a final antichrist will arise (2Th 2; Rev 17; Mt 24:15; Dan 11:31)
- Before Christ returns the Gospel will be preached to all nations:
 - the Great Commission fulfilled: Mt 24:14; 28:16ff; Rev 7:9ff
 - a great Harvest of Jews (coming to Christ): Rom 11:25-27

- **How then shall “we” live?** Proclaim the 2nd Coming as part of the Gospel: & be Gospel-centered in our End-time prophecy

- Christ's return is part of Salvation/the Gospel: Heb 9:28; Ac 17:30f
- End-time prophecy is focused on Christ: Rev 1:1ff; 19:10; 22:16ff
- Examples: 1) share that Jesus is the only Way to heaven/the Father and that He is the only One coming back to judge & to save; 2) when you think about the gospel, think about the cross and His return; 3) when you think about end-time prophecy, keep your eyes on Jesus more than modern day events or the anti-christ.

3. A Summary Statement (EFCA Statement of Faith #9): The Doctrine of Christ's Return

We believe in the personal, bodily and premillennial return of our Lord Jesus Christ. The coming of Christ, at a time known only to God, demands constant expectancy and, as our blessed hope, motivates the believer to godly living, sacrificial service and energetic mission.

