

# Michael W. Smith

## STATEMENT OF FAITH

I believe in one triune God, who is revealed to us as God the Creator – who created the world good and made everyone equal in God's image. I believe in God, the Son – Jesus – who came to earth as the Redeemer of humanity and Savior of the world. Jesus proclaimed the Good News of the gospel in word and deed calling all to repent and believe. I believe in God, the Holy Spirit, the One who is the giver and re-newer of life. God is involved throughout the entire universe, and reigns in the affairs of humankind with perfect wisdom, love, mercy and judgment.

I believe the human race fell into original sin, which is expressed in the Biblical account of Adam and Eve contained in the book of Genesis. Thus, all humans have sinned and fallen short of God's glory. We sin by hurting God and others with our words and actions. To pay the penalty for our sin, Jesus Christ came as the only-begotten Son of God to redeem humanity. Jesus Christ walked upon this earth, fully God and fully human. Jesus came to earth to live a perfect life, to be crucified on the cross, and to break the power of sin and death. Jesus was raised from the dead, ascended into heaven, sits at the right-hand of God Almighty and will come again to judge the living and the dead, as God's kingdom will never end.

I believe God, the Holy Spirit is the Lord and giver of life, who claims us in the waters of baptism, draws us to repentance to accept Jesus Christ as our personal Lord and Savior, by God's free grace, through faith. The Holy Spirit binds the universal church together to be the body of Christ on earth. The Great Ends of the Church include the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind. We, the Church, are called, nourished, renewed and sustained by the Holy Spirit to work together for the peace, unity and purity of the Church. Unfortunately we, the Church, fall-short of being God's hands and feet on earth. Too often, we become inward focused, concerned solely about the church and lose focus of God's mission to the community in which we have been called to serve. Nevertheless, God continues to love and sustain the Church for God's glory by the power of the Holy Spirit.

I believe the sacraments of Baptism and Lord's Supper are signs and seals of God's covenant, given to us as gifts, to nurture our faith. They remind us that God will never leave us or forsake us. God's Scripture, the sixty-six books that make-up the Old Testament and New Testament, are God's self-revelation to humanity. These sacred writings are the unique and authoritative Word of God for the Church and all of life. I rejoice that nothing in life or death can separate us from God's love.

I believe in life and death we belong to God and our chief end on earth is to worship and glorify God forever. Jesus Christ will return to earth personally, visibly and bodily as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. When Jesus returns the dead shall be raised and all of humanity will be judged. The unbelieving will be relegated to eternal punishment; the believing to eternal life in the new heavens and earth, bringing glory to God forever and ever.