

We are thinking through the topics in our statement of faith with a view to improving on the basis, not removing any point, but expressing more clearly the points we have while also adding points that we failed to cover initially.

Last week's suggestion on the Doctrine of Christ

Jesus Christ

We believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, God's eternal Son Who was begotten by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, and is truly God and truly Man, one Person with two natures, divine and human, who never sinned while yet dwelling among men as a man.

Matthew 1.18-25, John 1.1-3, 14, 2 Corinthians 5.21.

We believe the Lord Jesus Christ died as a substitutionary sacrifice for the sins of all men according to the Scriptures, and all who receive Him are justified on the grounds of His shed blood.

Galatians 4.4-5, 1 Corinthians 15.3-4, 2 Corinthians 5.21, Romans 3.21-26, Hebrews 2.9, 1 John 2.2

We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His bodily ascension into Heaven, and in His present life there as High Priest for us.

Matthew 28.1-10; Acts 1.9; Hebrews 7.25-28

We believe in the imminent return of Christ prior to the inauguration of Daniel's seventieth week, at which time all believers in Christ will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and be kept from the promised period of divine wrath upon the Earth.

Daniel 9.24-27, 1 Thessalonians 4.14-17, 5.9, 1 Corinthians 15.51-53, Romans 5.9, Revelation 3.10

A revision to the revision

Jesus Christ

We believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, God's eternal Son Who was begotten by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, and is truly God and truly Man, one Person with two natures, divine and human, who never sinned while yet dwelling among men as a man, displaying his humanity in his body and his deity in his mighty works.

Matthew 1.18-25, John 1.1-3, 14, 10.25, 37-38, 11.35, 14.10-11, 2 Corinthians 5.21

We believe the Lord Jesus Christ died as a substitutionary sacrifice for the sins of all men, that God raised the crucified body of our Lord Jesus Christ from the grave, that He bodily ascended to Heaven, where he presently intercedes as High Priest for us, and that He will bodily return for the saints at the end of the age, inaugurating the events of the last days.

Galatians 4.4-5, 1 Corinthians 15.3-4, 2 Corinthians 5.21, Romans 3.21-26, Hebrews 2.9, 1 John 2.2, Matthew 28.1-10; Acts 1.9; Hebrews 7.25-28, 1 Thessalonians 4.14-17, 1 Corinthians 15.51-53

This removes the lines that more properly point to the Doctrine of Salvation and the Doctrine of Last Things (Eschatology). That leaves us with a succinct description of the person and work of Christ.

The Doctrine of the Spirit

Our Statement

The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a person. We believe that He is the active agent in regeneration: convicting, changing, and cleansing men's hearts at salvation. We believe that at the point of salvation the Spirit takes up permanent residence in the heart of the believer and that He continues to fill the believer's life, correcting, admonishing, and teaching him in the way that he should go.

John 14.16-17, John 14.26, John 16.7-14, Ephesians 1.13-14, Romans 8.13-14, Romans 8.16, Romans 8.26-27.

The FBFI Statement

Section 4. The Holy Spirit: We believe in the eternal deity and personality of the Holy Spirit Who is one of the three Persons of the Trinity. We believe the following are among His ministries: the restraining of evil in the world to the measure of the divine will; the conviction of the world regarding sin, righteousness, and judgment; the calling and regeneration of all believers; the indwelling of those who are saved; and, the continued filling for power, teaching, and service of all among the saved who are truly yielded to Him (Rm 8.28, 29; 1 Cor 1.24; 2

Thess 2.7; Jn 3.6; 16.7-11; Rm 8.9; Eph 4.30, 5.18). We believe the Holy Spirit produces His fruit in the lives of all believers (Gal 5.22, 23; Col 1.10, 12). We believe some gifts of the Holy Spirit were temporary. We believe that certain gifts, being miraculous in nature, were prevalent in the church in the first century. They were foundational and transitional. These gifts have ceased, being no longer needed because the Scriptures have been completed and the church has been divinely certified (Heb 2.1-4; 1 Cor 13.8-12; Eph 2.20). We believe that speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the filling or baptism of the Spirit. We believe God, in accord with His own will, does hear and answer prayer for the sick and afflicted (1 Cor 12.11, 30; 13.8; Jas 5.14-16).

Toronto Baptist Seminary Statement

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person; (a) equal with God the Father and (b) God the Son and (c) of the same nature; (d) that He was active in the creation; (e) that in His relation to the unbelieving world He restrains the Evil One until God's purpose is fulfilled; (f) that He convicts of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; (g) that He bears witness to the truth of the gospel in preaching and testimony; (h) that He is the Agent in the New Birth; (i) that He sanctifies, and assures to us all the benefits of salvation.

Observations:

1. The FBFI statement is more comprehensive in describing the work of the Spirit and is the only one making any statement correcting the errors of the charismatic movement.
2. Our statement identifies three persons in the Godhead (Doctrine of God) so does not mention the Trinity in this section.
3. The description of the work of the Spirit must walk a fine line in describing his work in Salvation (to allow obedient brothers to agree to disagree – Calvinism vs. Arminianism vs. all points in between).
4. On the other hand, the description of the work of the Spirit must clearly define his work in giving gifts to men in order to exclude charismatic error.

Suggestion:

- We could improve our statement in two ways: 1) expanding the description of the work of the Spirit with more precise language and 2) clearly exclude charismatism.

The Holy Spirit

We believe in the eternal deity and personality of the Holy Spirit equal with God the Father and God the Son, of the same nature, but not a distinct being — three persons, one being.

We believe the Spirit works in the restraining of evil in the world to the measure of the divine will; the conviction of the world regarding sin, righteousness, and judgment; the calling and regeneration of all believers; the permanent indwelling of believers through the baptism of the Spirit at the point of salvation; the continued filling for power, teaching, and service of all among the saved who are truly yielded to Him; and the production of His fruit and giving His gifts to believers.

John 3.6, 16.7-11, Ephesians 4.30, John 14.16-17, John 14.26, John 16.7-14, Romans 8.9, Romans 8.13-14, Romans 8.16, Romans 8.26-27, 1 Corinthians 12.4-11, Galatians 5.22-23, Ephesians 1.13-14, Ephesians 5.18, Colossians 1.10-12, 2 Thessalonians 2.7

We believe some gifts of the Holy Spirit are temporary and that the miraculous sign-gifts were a phenomenon of the apostolic age, lending authority and credence to the apostles and their message. They were foundational and transitional. These gifts ceased with the completion of the Scriptures and the divine certification of the church. We believe that speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the filling or baptism of the Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12.30, 1 Corinthians 13.8-12, Ephesians 2.19-20, Hebrews 2.1-4

¹ Cor 12.30 All do not have gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they?

¹ Cor 13.8-12 Love never fails; but if *there are gifts of prophecy*, they will be done away; if *there are tongues*, they will cease; if *there is knowledge*, it will be done away.⁹ For we know in part and we prophesy in part;¹⁰ but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away.¹¹ When I was a child, I used to

speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things.¹² For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known.

Ep 2.19-20 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household,²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner *stone*,

Heb 2.1-4 For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away *from it*.² For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty,³ how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard,⁴ God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.