



Doctrinal Statement

three parts: God, Humans, and the Church

I. God

God - this word often used much but rarely defined. here is what we mean when we use it.

according to reason alone. God is the uncaused cause of all things. He is the source of all life and breath. all is upheld or sustained by Him. He is the source of all things in the universe including universal morality. He is personal, one, and unchanging. He is that of which none greater can be conceived. He is the only true God and thereby is worthy to receive all glory from all things.

according to Scripture. God is one. undivided in substance. He is creator of all things out of nothing. He is properly referred to as a He. God is sovereign: the only free being. free in His power, free in His knowledge, free in His presence, and free in His morality. as the only sovereign He reigns over all things upholding them and controlling them for His good purposes. He does this in a way that keeps Him distinct from his creation (He is not a pantheos) and He does this without sinning (He is holy) and He never changes. as the only free being He is infinite and perfect in all His attributes. God, the one being and exists in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. this is a trinity. each of the persons are distinct and yet one. this is a profound and wonderful mystery. God is. specific revelation has several names for God and several descriptions. all names and characteristics (including anthropomorphisms, anthropopathisms, and animorphisms) fall short of detailing God. God simply is. God exists for himself and does all things to enjoy Himself. all things reflect His glory and are to bring him glory.

A. God the Father

as Father He is the supreme leader and Lord of all things and all peoples. He is a perfect Father in his care and discipline of all His creations. He is particularly the Father of His only uniquely divine-human son, Jesus Christ. He is the chief example of what it is to be a Father.

B. God the Son

as the Son, Jesus Christ is fully human and fully God. as God all things were made by Him and for Him. at the beginning of the first century God the son entered space and time to take on human form on earth by being conceived by the Holy Spirit to the virgin Mary, of the daughters of Aaron and who was engaged to Joseph son of Eli. Jesus is the Christ, meaning He is the messiah or saviour of all peoples. as a human Jesus felt and experienced all the weaknesses of having a human nature yet He lived without ever sinning and fulfilled all the Law despite such weakness. when He was thirty he began teaching and performing miracles proclaiming that He was the Christ. when He was approximately thirty-three He was crucified on a cross. three days later Jesus rose up from the dead with a perfected human body and appeared to over five-hundred witnesses before returning to heaven. when the son of God took on human form He veiled his glory as God of God without ever surrendering His divine attributes. how Jesus Christ is both fully God and fully man at the same time is a mystery. Jesus Christ will return to earth one day in pure unveiled glory to gather His elect and to judge the unrighteous.

C. God the Holy Spirit

as the Holy Spirit, God acts. from creation to consummation the Holy Spirit is God exerting His power. the Holy Spirit is a distinct person of the Godhead and proceeds from the Father and the Son, He is the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, Jesus Christ. God the Holy Spirit exerts power in creation and empowering acts and also acts of conviction and judgment. the Holy Spirit enables humans to come to a first love God, to continue loving God, to do works that please God,

and to become more like God. the Holy Spirit is the unique divine author of Scripture. the Holy Spirit established and upholds the church.

II. Humans

humans - in our day it is often assumed, without question, that each individual is the center of all things including truth, happiness, morality, purpose and many other things. our estimation of mankind is much different. here is what we conclude about mankind.

A. the essential nature of humanity

mankind includes all human beings, male and female. mankind consists as one class of beings created by God among others. human beings are distinct in that they are created in the image of God, meaning they uniquely have a moral capacity to exercise creativity, possess individual gifts, and to be saved to a intimate relationship with God. all human beings have a soul. the soul is an immaterial and eternal part of each being where personality, thoughts, emotions, and morality resides. thus human beings are two-parted. yet, these two parts are combined together in a unified person. how exactly is a mystery. mankind was created in the forms of male and female. every male and female is created with a distinct purpose and role to exercise. male is made to exemplify God's leadership characteristics in varying capacities including those in the home and the church. female is made to exemplify God's nurturing and helping characteristics in varying capacities including those in the home and the church. the chief purpose of all mankind in all their respective roles is to make much of God by enjoying Him and pursuing the knowledge of Him.

B. the sinfulness of humanity

sin is not giving God glory. it is not so much a violation against some abstract set of rules but a personal offense to God. all creation intends to propel us to give God glory. to give God glory is to make much of Him, to recognize that He is great and give Him thanks and praise. sin is a relational attack against an infinite God. the ten commandments are universal moral law written on the hearts of all men. sin is not limited to the performing of a sinful action but first begins in the inclination of the heart. the Torah or the written Jewish law of special revelation is intended to teach that mankind is sinful inside and incapable performing enough right actions to fix this internal problem. adam, the first human to live was also the first human to sin. when adam sinned, he not only sinned individually but as a collective representative of a chain of all humanity yet to be born. in addition, all humanity has followed his example of sinning. since adam every human being is born sinful from the time of conception in the womb. this sinfulness is transmitted through human race. how is a mystery. the sinfulness of mankind is a total depravity of the heart and mind. mankind is completely unable to comprehend the truth of God and completely deplete of any ability to love God unless God does something in Him. mankind has a bound will so that humans are naturally unable to do that which they were made to do, they lack a free will.

C. the judgment of humanity

mankind is in need of being saved from coming judgment. God as the source and upholder of morality, the supreme judge of all, could not be called good if he did not properly administer justice. the offense of sin against an infinite God properly requires an infinite, eternal response. thus all who sin, all human beings, deserve the infinite response of God's right justice. when the physical part of a human dies the eternal part of human, the soul, lives on and will, at one point, receive an unperishable material body. humans will then suffer the eternal outpouring of God's wrath. this wrath will be the experience of the utter presence of God's in all his fierceness of anger. this anger will no longer be accompanied by any of the loving compassion of God's mercy by which he exerts his anger in our time. in this eternal state of hell His anger will be expressed in the creation of a spiritual and material furnace of fire where its victims are exquisitely tortured in their minds and in their bodies. these damned humans will forever be agonized by the pure unleashing of the raging unsatisfied lust of their fellow humans and by demons and by the sad and regretful memories of loved ones and most of all, being completely cut off from God's love. mankind is in need of salvation from this impending doom.

D. the salvation of humanity

1. election

mankind is completely unable to do anything to prevent the impending doom of the coming judgment. no matter how many good works are performed they could never amount to paying off the infinite debt every individual owes for violating an infinitely holy God. furthermore, the attempt to merit one's own salvation in any one work further incurs debt for its false confidence that mankind can do any good thing apart from God's doing in and through him. to put it simply, mankind is stuck and if God were not to do anything about it we are hopeless and life is meaningless and empty. yet God has chosen from before the creation of the world to create humans and to create a certain number of them to be recipients of a gift of salvation. these are known as the elect or the predestined. these are a special select group of people who are destined to forever experience the unending pleasure of God. since all humans are equally deserving of the eternal wrath of God, the reason God chose the ones He has is a mystery. only God knows exactly who these are.

2. substitutionary propitiation

from before the foundation of the world God determined the way He would save the elect for Himself without compromising His justice for their sin. this is through His son, Jesus Christ. since Jesus Christ is God, He is of an infinite eternal worth. since Jesus Christ is man He is a sufficient representative and substitute for humans. thousands of people were beat up and crucified on crosses in antiquity. what makes the crucifixion of Jesus Christ of any significance is that He was the God-man on the cross. on the cross Jesus Christ suffered the eternal punishment humans incur. it was eternal and therefore sufficient because He was infinite God. on the cross Jesus died in place of humans and could do so because He was fully human and yet never sinned and thus never deserved any punishment. this work of Jesus Christ is unlimited in its divine worth and value because Jesus Christ is of infinite worth, yet this work was purposed for the elect to whom its justifying benefit is imputed at a specific moment in the course of their lives.

3. justification

Jesus died for a particular group of people. the way that elect receive this gift is by a work of the Holy Spirit who first draws them and unblinds their eyes to see the beauty of Christ and how His work on the cross is sufficient for their sin. this seeing, is purely a gift and is called faith. it occurs after the Holy Spirit's drawing when God imputes the work of Christ to the individual. this faith, and it alone, justifies or makes one right so that they may truly know God. through this faith, the elect are not only saved from the coming wrath of God but are also saved to enjoy God's glory forevermore. at a point either after physical death or when Christ returns to earth, the elect will receive a resurrected body of the same kind as Christ. in resurrected bodies, Jesus Christ will gather the people He died for that they might delight in Him forever as He continually shows them more and more wonderful things that are beyond our ability to conceive.

4. glorification

some of the things will include great feasts, a life in a new heavens and new earth that does not decay and where there is no strife among animals. there will be cities and perfect peace with no possibility of sadness. the elect will rejoice at the supreme justice of God as they witness him unleash it upon His enemies unceasingly. the elect will eternally delight in their salvation never ceasing to be amazed at what Jesus Christ did for them. the glory of God will be their all as He ever introduces them to new sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and things to touch. beyond these things are mysteries in which the imagination of them is pleasing and good.

E. the sanctification of mankind

between the time a person is justified and the time a person either dies or Christ returns, they are in a process of sanctification. sanctification is the continual work of saved sinners being made holy or sinless, like Christ. this is a purifying work of the Holy Spirit wherein He progressively infuses into our hearts the righteousness of Christ secured for us in heaven. the Holy Spirit does this through a continual filling which convicts us of sin, enables us to fight sin, enlightens us to read the Bible with understanding and delight, compels us to pray with free access to God, moves us to creatively share the good news of Christ's work with people, and continually opens us up to see God and His work causing us to marvel with wonder. when sanctification is complete the elect will have a free will and be able to love and adore God without any sinful hindrances as

mankind was created to do.

III. The Church

the church - today church is frequently seen either as a religious institution or as a building. here is what we mean when we call The Resolved a church.

A. the historic church

Jesus Christ came to earth to gather and save a people for Himself that they might forever enjoy glorifying Him in numerous ways. this people is the universal or catholic church and Jesus intended it and began it by pouring out His Spirit on a specific Pentecost celebration in the first century. from that Pentecost on, the church has been growing as numerous groups of people have gathered together in specific places in the world with a common dedication to Jesus Christ.

B. the leadership of the church

the church is a body of people and Jesus Christ is its head. He is the chief pastor and the only one who is to lead alone and have a senior authority. God the Holy Spirit gives spiritual and physical gifts to every individual of the church. some of these gifts are for leading and some are for helping. under the leadership of Jesus Christ are undershepherds or elders. each local expression of the universal church is to have a plurality of elders, never a sole elder. elders must meet the biblical qualifications outlined in the pastoral epistles before they are accepted as an elder. all church decisions are made by the elders. elders are to prize unity and thus all church decisions must be unanimous among them. underneath the elders are deacons who help the elders lead in various capacities. deacons must also meet the biblical qualifications outlined in the pastoral epistles before they are accepted as a deacon. underneath deacons are the male men of the church who are the leaders of their home. men are to provide material and spiritual leadership in their home. currently duane smets is the sole elder of The Resolved Church while others are in preparation to join the eldership.

C. what the church does

the church exists for God and is to bring Him glory. one of the most important things the church does to do this is to devote itself the Apostle's teaching. thus The Resolved Church gets together on a regular basis to study, teach, and preach the Scriptures. the elders are especially equipped for this task. the elders interpret the Bible according to historical grammatical interpretation and are committed to exegetical expository preaching. in addition to the study of God's word, the church gathers together on a regular basis to sing praise to God and to eat some bread and drink some wine. our primary focus in singing is to declare who God is and what He has done. in the eating of bread and drinking of wine we remember our Lord Jesus Christ's life and death and receive the grace He chooses to impart when we partake. beyond the things the church does together on a regular basis there are numerous things the church may undertake in an effort to bring God glory by expanding His kingdom.