

Valley Christian Schools Doctrinal Basis

The Valley Christian Schools Society was organized by the Reformed community of the Bellflower-Artesia area, and took for its doctrinal basis the standards of the Reformed churches. These standards are first, the Holy Scriptures, and second, the Three Forms of Unity, which the Reformed churches received as correctly setting forth the Scriptural system of truth. Members of the School Society should be in substantial agreement with this doctrinal basis and should understand that the charter of the Society requires that all teaching in the school shall conform to this doctrinal basis. The *Three Forms of Unity* are the **Belgic Confession**, **The Heidelberg Catechism**, and the **Canons of Dort**. The principle teachings of the Christian faith as set forth in these writings may be summarized as follows:

Essentials Of The Christian Faith

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES - The Bible is the inspired word of God and hence is man's infallible guide in all matters of which it treats. It consists of sixty-six books and was given to man through human authors who were so influenced by God and the Holy Spirit that what they wrote is the Word of God. Our ultimate authority is the Bible.

GOD - There is only one eternal, all-powerful, and all-knowing, triune God. This means that the one God is, at one and the same time, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Each Person in the Godhead is fully God with all the infinite qualities, yet each Person is also completely distinct. This is the mystery of the Trinity. Although the three Persons are active in all the works of God, there are distinctions in function. Creation and providence are particularly ascribed to the Father. The Son is the Mediator who became flesh that He might be the Savior of sinners. The Holy Spirit is the Sanctifier of the Church.

MAN - Man and his environment have come into existence by the creative act of God. Unlike other creatures on the earth, man was created in the likeness of God. As God's image-bearer, man was created in a state of righteousness to be the servant and friend to God. The original pair, Adam and Eve, yielded to the temptation of Satan and violated the express command of God. They thus abandoned their righteous condition and fell into sin. As representatives of the race that was to spring from them, they involved all of humanity in sin. As a result all are born in a sinful condition and cannot find acceptance with God, unless they are redeemed by Christ.

SALVATION - Salvation is freely given by God, merely of grace, only for the sake of Christ's merits. The Lord, Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Trinity, became flesh, lived a sinless life, and died a substitutionary death and arose from the grave to redeem God's elect. God grants and credits such sinners the perfect satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ, as if they had never sinned nor been a sinner. Only this can make one right with God. This righteousness can be received in no other way than by faith alone. In this way they are justified before God's judgment, adopted into the family of God, and made ready for heaven.

THE COVENANT OF GRACE AND CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW - God enters into a covenant with those whom He is saving. As God revealed to Abraham, this covenant includes the children of believers. These covenant children bear a special relationship to God and have a special responsibility. Thus God's people, the Church, are regarded as being made up of believers and their children. The children should be equipped with knowledge to bring peace and transformation into our fallen world. Thus, we teach children how to live in the world as opposed to sheltering them from the fallen world.

SANCTIFICATION - Those sinners who have been brought into God's Covenant of Grace are indwelt by God, the Holy Spirit from the moment of their regeneration so that they are now able to glorify God through righteous and holy living. The guide for this holy living is found in the Moral Law of God as set forth in the Ten Commandments and as summarized by Christ in Matthew 22:37-39: "Jesus said unto them, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, thou shalt

love thy neighbor as thyself." Although the believer must struggle against his sinful nature throughout this life, the indwelling Holy Spirit will increasingly bring forth in this life the fruits of sanctification.

FINAL THINGS - When history has run the course laid out for it in God's plan, the Lord, Jesus Christ will return in power and glory to judge impenitent sinners and to take His redeemed people to live with Him for eternity. Until that time it is the duty of God's people to glorify the name of their Covenant God by living righteously and prayerfully, by witnessing concerning His grace to all people, and by bringing all things into subjection to the Lordship of Christ.

Reformed Distinctives

1. All areas of life are created by God and need to be transformed, enjoyed, and worked by His people. All things were created good and became corrupted with sin. We are called upon to bring restoration to this fallen world with the help of God, to understand it and be a light in it.
2. God's plan of salvation has not changed throughout history. A single plan of God's love has been unfolding since creation.
3. Infants are baptized to indicate they are part of his covenant of grace. As they mature, they publicly express their desire to commit their life fully to God.
4. The understanding of the depth of our sinfulness and our inability to achieve salvation outside of the grace of God is specified in the Canons of Dort. Specifically, there are five points that are helpful in distinguishing reformed beliefs regarding salvation:
 - a. Radical Corruption. We believe sin has corrupted every aspect of our being. People are unable to choose God without first being regenerated (reborn) by the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - b. Unconditional Election. God chooses to save people from sin's penalties based on his sovereign plan.
 - c. Intentional Atonement. The extent of Christ's sacrifice is focused on the elect. This means that his atonement was completely effective in bringing about salvation for everyone in God's salvation plan.
 - d. Effectual Calling. God's regenerative call is completely effective and cannot be rejected. Once someone is born again, they will follow God's call.
 - e. Preservation of Believers. God's elect cannot lose their salvation.

Contrary Teachings

1. We do not believe in the infallibility of any church pontiff, cardinal, or patriarch.
2. We do not believe in purgatory.
3. We do not believe in devotion to Mary or "The Saints," nor are they intermediaries between us and God.
4. We do not believe a human priest can mediate between Christians and God.
5. We do not believe in mortal and venial sins because all sin renders us guilty before God.
6. We do not believe that people can contribute towards their salvation or can earn salvation through their good deeds and actions.
7. We do not believe that Christ had only a divine nature while on earth.

Parent Signature _____ Date _____