

# For the Love of the Truth

95 NEW THESES FOR OUR GENERATION



## **For the Love of the Truth**

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# Introduction

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On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther published his 95 Theses. In this clear statement, he referred to the Holy Scripture alone. This resulted in the Reformation in Germany and Europe. What our world today needs is this Gospel of Grace. May this publication help to preserve it and encourage evangelical Christians to confess and witness to the Gospel.

We have entitled these new Theses, “**For the Love of the Truth,**” because of Martin Luther’s Preface to his 95 Theses:

*“Out of **love for the truth** and from desire to elucidate it, the Reverend Father Martin Luther, Master of Arts and Sacred Theology, and ordinary lecturer therein at Wittenberg, intends to defend the following statements and to dispute on them in that place. Therefore, he asks that those who cannot be present and dispute with him orally shall do so in their absence by letter. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.” (Martin Luther)*

In light of the 500th anniversary of the 95 theses, we publish the following new theses for our generation. Our prayer is that these theses will draw you deeper into Holy Scripture so that you might live by faith alone in Christ alone.

doers: for I will keep the commandments of my God.

116 Uphold me according unto thy word, that I may live; and let me not be ashamed of my hope.

117 Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe; and I will have respect unto thy statutes continually.

118 Thou hast trodden down all them that err from thy statutes: for their deceit is falsehood.

119 Thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth like dross: therefore I love thy testimonies.

120 My flesh trembleth for fear of thee; and I am afraid of thy judgments.

## AIN

121 I have done judgment and justice: leave me not to mine oppressors.

122 Be surety for thy servant for good: let not the proud oppress me.

123 Mine eyes fail for thy salvation, and for the word of thy righteousness.

124 Deal with thy servant according unto thy mercy, and teach me thy statutes.

125 I am thy servant; give me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies.

126 It is time for thee, LORD, to work: for they have made void thy law.

127 Therefore I love thy

commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold.

128 Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way.

## PE

129 Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them.

130 The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.

131 I opened my mouth, and panted: for I longed for thy commandments.

132 Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me; as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name.

133 Order my steps in thy word; and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.

134 Deliver me from the oppression of man: so will I keep thy precepts.

135 Make thy face to shine upon thy servant, and teach me thy statutes.

136 Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law.

## TZADDI

137 Righteous art thou, O LORD, and upright are thy judgments.

138 Thy testimonies that thou hast commanded are righteous and very faithful.

139 My zeal hath consumed me, because mine enemies have forgotten thy words.

140 Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it.

141 I am small and despised: yet do not I forget thy precepts.

142 Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth.

143 Trouble and anguish have taken hold on me: yet thy commandments are my delights.

144 The righteousness of thy testimonies is everlasting: give me understanding, and I shall live.

## KOPH

145 I cried with my whole heart; hear me, O LORD: I will keep thy statutes.

146 I cried unto thee; save me, and I shall keep thy testimonies.

147 I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried: I hoped in thy word.

148 Mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I might meditate in thy word.

149 Hear my voice according unto thy lovingkindness; O LORD: quicken me according to thy judgment.

150 They draw nigh that follow after mischief: they are far from thy law.

151 Thou art near, O LORD; but thy law is far off.

152 Concerning thy testimo-

nies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them for ever.

## RESH

153 Consider mine affliction, and deliver me: for I do not forget thy law.

154 Plead my cause, and deliver me; quicken me according to thy word.

155 Salvation is far from the wicked: for they seek not thy statutes.

156 Great are thy tender mercies, O LORD; quicken me according to thy judgments.

157 Many are my persecutors and mine enemies; yet do I not decline from thy testimonies.

158 I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved; because they kept not thy word.

159 Consider how I love thy precepts: quicken me, O LORD, according to thy lovingkindness.

160 Thy word is true from the beginning; and every one of the righteous judgments endureth for ever.

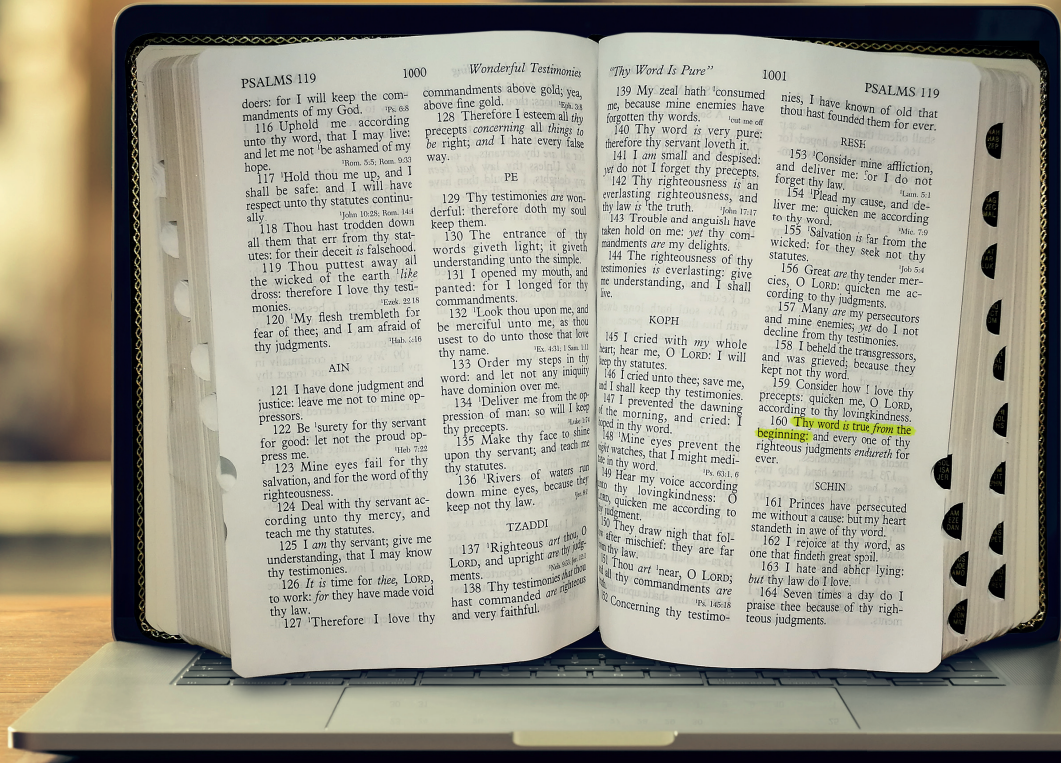
## SCHIN

161 Princes have persecuted me without a cause: but my heart standeth in awe of thy word.

162 I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.

163 I hate and abhor lying; but thy law do I love.

164 Seven times a day do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments.







# 95 NEW THESES

FOR OUR GENERATION

Sola Scriptura

Sola fide

Sola Gratia

Solus Christus

Soli Deo Gloria

The Church

# Sola Scriptura

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**1** Holy Scripture is God’s written Word. The original autographs are God-breathed, authoritative, clear and inerrant. The Word is wholly sufficient, providing everything essential for life and godliness.

**2** Holy Scripture is the only written Word of God. Therefore, the belief that dreams, voices in one’s head, or strong mental impressions should be proclaimed and heeded as “prophecy” is an ungodly superstition. It has no biblical warrant and is a dangerously foolish way of trying to discern the Lord’s will.

**3** All religious experience must be evaluated in the light of Scripture. This principle must not be reversed.

**4** Since *Prima Scriptura* (Scripture first) sees the Word of God only as primary and not ultimate or sufficient, it must be abandoned in theory and practice. Both Roman Catholics, with their tradition and the Magisterium, as well as Charismatics, with their internal, subjective impressions, function under the rubric of *Prima Scriptura*. Instead, *Sola Scriptura* (Holy Scripture alone) must be believed, taught and practiced.



# BY SCRIPTURE ALONE

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**5** Following in the footsteps of Ulrich Zwingli – who started his ministry with the verse by verse exposition of the Gospel of Matthew – *lectio continua* (sequential exposition), not *lectio selecta* (random selection), should be the principle for the preaching and teaching of God’s Word. This insures God’s people are exposed to the full counsel of God.

**6** While God’s power and wisdom can be clearly seen in nature, only Scripture reveals God as the triune Savior.

**7** Apart from the Holy Spirit’s work, the Word of God remains foolish to the unbeliever.

**8** The person searching for higher knowledge outside of the Bible will never experience the fullness of Christ.

**9** Higher criticism (along with its critique, analogy, and correlation) is not merely an investigative tool for historical research, but it is a worldview grounded in rebellion against God’s deity.

**10** The divinely-ordained means for reaching a hostile world is the proclamation of the gospel—a message that is a major stumbling block to some and is like pure foolishness to others.

# Sola Scriptura

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**11** Because the Holy Scripture is God's Word, it is inerrant as God Himself is inerrant. Therefore, no man or church can decree it to be God's true Word, because that would elevate man's reason above God.

**12** Inerrancy is not a peculiar teaching or peripheral matter of hermeneutics. Jesus Christ affirmed the Scripture as inerrant.



All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:19-21).

For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe (1 Corinthians 1:21).

Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away (Matthew 24:35).



A long, straight wooden pier with railings extends from the bottom center towards the horizon, disappearing into a vast blue sky filled with large, white, fluffy clouds. The perspective is from the end of the pier, looking down its length.

*Sola fide*

BY **FAITH** ALONE

# Sola fide

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**13** Real faith is not merely an intellectual assent to a bare outline of gospel facts; it entails an earnest trust in Christ as He is offered to us in the gospel.

**14** Saving faith entails knowledge (*notitia*), assent (*assensus*) and trust (*fiducia*).

**15** Authentic faith perseveres.

**16** Faith and faithfulness are not to be equated. Faith has its object, the Lord Jesus Christ. Faithfulness stems from faith in Christ.

**17** Saving faith in Jesus will result in faithfulness in the believer, not vice versa.

**18** Christians will be justified on the last day for the same reason they were justified at their regeneration – by faith alone in the person and work of Jesus Christ. When there is talk about present justification and final justification, the biblical view of justification by faith alone has been lost.

**19** There is no saving knowledge of God apart from believing Jesus Christ.



## BY FAITH ALONE

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**20** Saving faith does not hide the sinner's shame with any human, priestly, religious, or moral fig leaves. Therefore, a true Roman Catholic cannot be a true Christian.

**21** Faith is the only instrument of justification. Faith is not meritorious.

**22** The pursuit of righteousness is a result of imputed righteousness.

**23** Justification by faith alone can never be lost since it is a work of God.

**24** Justification by faith alone is never by the infusing of righteousness, but by the imputation of the sinner's sin to Christ's account and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to the believer's account.

**25** Because the Scripture is all-sufficient to know Christ and believe in Him, we reject the belief that God will bring about salvation in Christ through the sacraments, visions, or dreams.

**26** Faith expects everything from Christ and nothing from itself. It binds itself to the Word of God.

# Sola Fide

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For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.” Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness (Romans 4:3-5).

Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him (John 3:36).

Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life (John 5:24).

For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved (Römer 10:10).

So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ (Romans 10:17).

A pair of hands is shown in a prayer position, with fingers pointing upwards and palms facing each other. The hands are set against a bright, warm, golden light that creates a lens flare effect, suggesting a sunrise or sunset. The overall mood is peaceful and spiritual.

# *Sola Gratia*

BY **GRACE** ALONE



# Sola Gratia

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**27** God's grace is the cause of the redeemed sinner's faith, not vice versa.

**28** Those who think grace exempts believers from the duty to mortify ungodliness and worldly lusts have not understood the first thing about the grace of our holy God.

**29** Grace is not to be confused with merit in any way. Just as law and gospel are different, grace and merit cannot coexist. Arminianism is a distortion of this difference, no matter how loudly they insist otherwise.

**30** Renewed focus upon grace alone must manifest itself in the highlighting of the One full of grace and truth, Jesus Christ. The mystical impulses to go inward for revelation, must be resisted.

**31** He who grasps grace will extol it as "amazing grace."

**32** Grace humbles us because it is granted sovereignly and freely.

## BY GRACE ALONE

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**33** If your conscience is not troubled when you habitually sin, it is not because you have a superior understanding of grace. It should cause you to examine yourself.

**34** The message of God's grace is simple and powerful; therefore, it must be faithfully proclaimed, without seeking to please men.

**35** Those who cloak the gospel in costumes of human cleverness diminish its efficacy; they do not enhance it.

**36** Man, in his sinful and fallen nature, will never repent and believe. Man cannot cooperate with God to save himself. God alone saves by grace.

**37** God alone seeks and draws sinners through His Son, who came to save the lost.

**38** God saves monergistically. Salvation is from Him, through Him and to Him alone.

# Sola Gratia

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**39** Grace drives individuals toward holiness, goodness, godliness, and righteousness. Without such grace, an authentic change of heart is unattainable.



[...] For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus (Romans 3:22-24).

For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace (Romans 6:14).

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age (Titus 2:11-12).

So that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life (Titus 3:7).

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast (Ephesians 2:8-9).

A large, weathered wooden cross stands on a rocky hill. The sun is setting behind the cross, creating a bright glow and lens flare. The sky is filled with colorful clouds in shades of orange, yellow, and purple. The text 'Solus Christus' is written in a red, gothic-style font with a white outline, positioned to the right of the cross.

*Solus Christus*

THROUGH **CHRIST** ALONE



# Solus Christus

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**40** The church must proclaim Christ to every tribe and nation because He is the sinner's only hope for salvation.

**41** Preaching the written Word needs to highlight the person and work of Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word.

**42** Christ, the last Adam, accomplished what no man could. He obtained eternal redemption. Man's only contribution to salvation is sin.

**43** Saving grace is exclusively found in the person and work of Jesus Christ. Every other religion ends in damnation.

**44** Salvation must be accomplished by Christ. It cannot be achieved by man through works, tradition or religion.

# THROUGH **CHRIST** ALONE

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**45** The true dilemma of humanity is not loneliness, low self-esteem, depression, or any of the other personal problems that make him feel like victim rather than transgressor, but it is sin. Therefore, the true human solution is the God-man, Jesus Christ.

**46** At the center of Christ's death on the cross at Calvary, penal substitution through his shed blood is seen.

**47** Sooner or later every knee will bow before Jesus Christ and confess Him as Lord.

**48** There are only two options for any individual appearing before Christ on Judgment Day: disdainful opposition or loving worship.

**49** By declaring Himself to be the one and only savior, our LORD Jesus Christ uniformly uncovers ancient religions, modern humanism, and postmodern relativism as lies.

# Solus Christus

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**50** Rome continues to teach that pilgrimages, indulges, and purgatory remit the temporal punishment for sin. None of which are necessary for the true believer because of his union with Christ.

**51** We are blessed in Jesus Christ with every spiritual blessing from heaven. Therefore, “Solus Christus” rules out every “Jesus and...” The Father has given us everything in His Son.



Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me (John 14:6).

And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12).

The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost (1 Timothy 1:15).

For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time (1 Timothy 2:5-6).

Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:9-11).





**Soli Deo Gloria**

**GLORY TO GOD ALONE**

# Soli Deo Gloria

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**52** The triune God is glorified perfectly in Himself.

**53** God did not create us because He was bored or lonely; He made us so that He could glorify Himself.

**54** Jesus Christ's mission on earth in glorifying God was accomplished.

**55** God's glory embodies everything truly praiseworthy and everything we ought to desire. Therefore, he is more deserving of our wonder, interest, and delight than any earthly charm or pleasure.

**56** Because salvation of the lost and the maturation of the saints are not the work of man, God alone receives all glory.

**57** God is glorified as He simultaneously exercises all of His attributes and perfections. This occurs in creation, providence, and His great salvation.

# GLORY TO GOD ALONE

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**58** In his wisdom God rejected man's wisdom as the means by which He is to be known and glorified. Even "christian" academics should submit to this divine truth.

**59** God deserves glory for his majestic creation that he made in six days by His powerful Word.

**60** The church must embrace the foolishness of the message preached as the sole power given her whereby salvation is attained and God is most exalted.

**61** The pinnacle of a man glorifying God is seen in the obedience and submission of Jesus Christ to His Father.

**62** The goal of Christian evangelism is not to win the approval and appreciation of carnally-minded people, but to glorify God by calling guilty sinners to repentance and faith in Christ alone.



# Soli Deo Gloria

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**63** Recent popes, whose chosen titles include “Holy Father,” “the great bridge-builder,” and “the Vicar of Christ,” reside in the same Vatican, wear the same crown, and blaspheme God’s glory to the same degree as their medieval predecessors.

**64** In this age, those who pursue God’s glory and serve the Lord Jesus Christ are required to expose ecumenical seduction and to call those who believe and follow Roman Catholic doctrine to repentance. Love commands evangelism of Roman Catholics as it does evangelism of Jews and Muslims.

**65** God is not a means to an end, so that men might become significant. Rather, man has been created to honor and glorify his Creator.

**66** Salvation is so great and awesome that only God can provide it because it is His offense that must be appeased and His judgment that must be abated. He elects, He calls, He sanctifies, and He glorifies—all to His own glory.

**67** The ultimate goal for discipleship or sanctification is not the alleviation or solution of man’s problems, but the glorification of God.

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**68** God is to be glorified in both sacred and secular endeavors because there is no difference between the two.

**69** God has every right to glorify Himself. Man has every obligation to glorify God.



Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever! (1 Chronicles 16:34)

Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to your name give glory, for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness! (Psalmen 115:1)

So that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory (Ephesians 1:12).

“Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created” (Revelation 4,11).

For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen (Romans 11:36).

As the reformers taught us to always be reforming, we offer the following theses in order that **the church might be edified.**

A circle of hands reaching towards the center against a bright, sunlit sky. The hands are of various skin tones and are positioned around the perimeter, with fingers spread. The background is a bright, hazy sky with soft clouds, suggesting a sunrise or sunset. The overall mood is one of unity and hope.

# *The Church*

**ECCLESIA**



# The Church

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**70** The Roman Catholic Church's claim that they alone are the interpreters of Scripture is false.

**71** The Roman Catholic Church has no mediatorial role in salvation.

**72** The Roman Catholic Church is founded upon human tradition, that is, the Magisterium and the papacy. In doing so she stands against Scripture and denies Jesus Christ the Head of the one true church (ecclesia).

**73** Christians must resist every urge to sinfully collaborate in an unequal yoke with unbelievers even if they recognize abortion, euthanasia and homosexuality as sin. Truth must precede unity.

**74** God's church must be governed by the wisdom of biblical principles and not by business management or social philosophies.

**75** The church must not charge money for the dispensing of God's Word in discipleship or counseling. Ministry must not be a way of making profit.

**76** Pastors who labor in preaching and teaching should be financially supported by their local church, when possible, and freed up for their ministry.

**77** The minister's authority goes no further than the Bible.

**78** Numbers, assets and other measurable statistics must be ignored as litmus tests for true church growth.

**79** The social gospel is too short sighted for Christ's church. Redemption by the Triune God must be proclaimed. The poor can be fed yet still perish eternally if they are not forgiven.

**80** Christians ought to love their neighbor and do good works. But the mission of the church is not transforming the culture.

# The Church

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**81** The gospel is to be proclaimed by the church. It is the unique message and not a lifestyle to be lived. Jesus is the only one who could live a perfect life and even he made the proclamation his priority in ministry.

**82** The focus of ministry must be God for us, not only God in us.

**83** The church is a pillar and buttress of the truth revealed once and for all in Scripture.

**84** The Greatest Commission was the Son being sent by the Father to give his life for the sheep and to rescue them.

**85** Following her Lord, the church must make disciples according to her great commission.

**86** Making disciples starts with evangelism and continues with training and teaching the whole counsel of God.

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**87** Every true believer has the same mandate and privilege, to make more disciples of Jesus Christ. Every believer is in full-time ministry.

**88** Discipleship must include the non-negotiable aspect of training faithful men for the ministry. Elders must see the priority of passing on the ministry baton to faithful men. The future of the local church depends upon it.

**89** The mandate to intentionally disciple every member and to then train faithful men who will be able to teach others ought to be a major focus of every pastor, so that mature men can be sent out to preach and to plant new churches.

**90** A plurality of elders is not one option for church government. It is the only biblical form of shepherding Christ's church.

# The Church

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**91** So called “satellite churches” must work toward becoming autonomous churches with a plurality of elders.

**92** Video and audio-sermons, recorded or live, will never be a substitute to the preaching of a shepherd who knows his sheep and cares for them as an under-shepherd of Christ.

**93** The church that assumes the gospel in this generation will forget and neglect it in the next.

**94** May the church continue to rest in the grace of God until Jesus Christ returns. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

**95** The church glorified will never tire of proclaiming, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!”





In vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men (Mark 7:7).

Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? (2 Corinthians 6:14)

And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 1:30-31).

Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching (1 Timothy 5:17).

But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world (1 Timothy 6:6-7).

This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you (Titus 1:5).

I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth (1 Timothy 3:14-15).

[...] "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. (Luke 24:46-47)

And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it (Matthäus 16:18).

You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also (2 Timothy 2:1-2).

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age (Matthew 28:19-20).

[...] "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!" (Revelation 5:12)

# The Signers

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The here listed coworkers, teachers and friends of The Masters Academy International testify fully to an uncompromising stance regarding the Holy Scriptures that are expressed in the aforementioned theses.

*Mike Abendroth, Christian Andresen, Dave Beakley, Eberhard Dahm, Theo Friesen, Matthias Fröhlich, Johnny Gravino, Phil Johnson, Alexey Kolomytsev, Steve Lawson, Michael Leister, John MacArthur, Martin Manten, Wolfgang Nestvogel, Benedikt Peters, Johannes Pflaum, Robb Provost, Uwe Seidel, James White, Chris Williams.*



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We add **The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy** because the New Theses are based on the same understanding of the Bible as declared in the Statement. Thereby, we confess that the Scripture is completely authoritative in the same way as the authors of the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy in 1978.

# The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy<sup>1</sup>

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## Preface

The authority of Scripture is a key issue for the Christian Church in this and every age. Those who profess faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior are called to show the reality of their discipleship by humbly and faithfully obeying God's written Word. To stray from Scripture in faith or conduct is disloyalty to our Master. Recognition of the total truth and trustworthiness of Holy Scripture is essential to a full grasp and adequate confession of its authority.

The following Statement affirms this inerrancy of Scripture afresh, making clear our understanding of it and

warning against its denial. We are persuaded that to deny it is to set aside the witness of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit and to refuse that submission to the claims of God's own Word which marks true Christian faith. We see it as our timely duty to make this affirmation in the face of current lapses from the truth of inerrancy among our fellow Christians and misunderstanding of this doctrine in the world at large.

This Statement consists of three parts: a Summary Statement, Articles of Affirmation and Denial, and an Exposition. It has been prepared in the course of a three-day consultation in Chicago. Those who have signed the Summary Statement and the Articles wish to affirm their

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1 With kind Permission of Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals. <http://www.alliancenet.org/the-chicago-statement-on-biblical-inerrancy>

own conviction as to the inerrancy of Scripture and to encourage and challenge one another and all Christians to growing appreciation and understanding of this doctrine. We acknowledge the limitations of a document prepared in a brief, intensive conference and do not propose that this Statement be given creedal weight. Yet we rejoice in the deepening of our own convictions through our discussions together, and we pray that the Statement we have signed may be used to the glory of our God toward a new reformation of the Church in its faith, life, and mission.

We offer this Statement in a spirit, not of contention, but of humility and love, which we purpose by God's grace to maintain in any future dialogue arising out of what we have said. We gladly acknowledge that many who deny the inerrancy of Scripture do not display the consequences of this denial in the rest of their belief and behavior, and we are conscious that we who confess this doctrine often deny it in life by failing to bring our thoughts and deeds, our traditions and habits, into true subjection to the divine Word.

We invite response to this statement from any who see reason to amend its affirmations about Scripture by the light of Scripture itself, under whose infallible authority we stand as we speak. We claim no personal infallibility for the witness we bear, and for any help which enables us to strengthen this testimony to God's Word we shall be grateful.

## A Short Statement

1. God, who is Himself Truth and speaks truth only, has inspired Holy Scripture in order thereby to reveal Himself to lost mankind through Jesus Christ as Creator and Lord, Redeemer and Judge. Holy Scripture is God's witness to Himself.
2. Holy Scripture, being God's own Word, written by men prepared and superintended by His Spirit, is of infallible divine authority in all matters upon which it touches: it is to be believed, as God's instruction, in all that it affirms; obeyed, as God's command, in all that it requires; embraced, as God's pledge, in all that it promises.

3. The Holy Spirit, Scripture's divine Author, both authenticates it to us by His inward witness and opens our minds to understand its meaning.
4. Being wholly and verbally God-given, Scripture is without error or fault in all its teaching, no less in what it states about God's acts in creation, about the events of world history, and about its own literary origins under God, than in its witness to God's saving grace in individual lives.
5. The authority of Scripture is inescapably impaired if this total divine inerrancy is in any way limited or disregarded, or made relative to a view of truth contrary to the Bible's own; and such lapses bring serious loss to both the individual and the Church.

## Articles of Affirmation and Denial

### **Article I**

We affirm that the Holy Scriptures are to be received as the authoritative Word of God.

We deny that the Scriptures receive their authority from the Church, tradition, or any other human source.

### **Article II**

We affirm that the Scriptures are the supreme written norm by which God binds the conscience, and that the authority of the Church is subordinate to that of Scripture.

We deny that Church creeds, councils, or declarations have authority greater than or equal to the authority of the Bible.



### **Article III**

We affirm that the written Word in its entirety is revelation given by God.

We deny that the Bible is merely a witness to revelation, or only becomes revelation in encounter, or depends on the responses of men for its validity.

### **Article IV**

We affirm that God who made mankind in His image has used language as a means of revelation.

We deny that human language is so limited by our creatureliness that it is rendered inadequate as a vehicle for divine revelation. We further deny that the corruption of human culture and language through sin has thwarted God's work of inspiration.

### **Article V**

We affirm that God's revelation in the Holy Scriptures was progressive.

We deny that later revelation, which may fulfill earlier revelation, ever corrects or contradicts it. We further deny

that any normative revelation has been given since the completion of the New Testament writings.

### **Article VI**

We affirm that the whole of Scripture and all its parts, down to the very words of the original, were given by divine inspiration.

We deny that the inspiration of Scripture can rightly be affirmed of the whole without the parts, or of some parts but not the whole.

### **Article VII**

We affirm that inspiration was the work in which God by His Spirit, through human writers, gave us His Word. The origin of Scripture is divine. The mode of divine inspiration remains largely a mystery to us.

We deny that inspiration can be reduced to human insight, or to heightened states of consciousness of any kind.

### **Article VIII**

We affirm that God in His Work of inspiration utilized the distinctive personalities and literary styles of the writers whom He had chosen and prepared.

We deny that God, in causing these writers to use the very words that He chose, overrode their personalities.

### **Article IX**

We affirm that inspiration, though not conferring omniscience, guaranteed true and trustworthy utterance on all matters of which the Biblical authors were moved to speak and write.

We deny that the finitude or fallenness of these writers, by necessity or otherwise, introduced distortion or falsehood into God's Word.

### **Article X**

We affirm that inspiration, strictly speaking, applies only to the autographic text of Scripture, which in the providence of God can be ascertained from available manuscripts with great accuracy. We further affirm that copies

and translations of Scripture are the Word of God to the extent that they faithfully represent the original.

We deny that any essential element of the Christian faith is affected by the absence of the autographs. We further deny that this absence renders the assertion of Biblical inerrancy invalid or irrelevant.

### **Article XI**

We affirm that Scripture, having been given by divine inspiration, is infallible, so that, far from misleading us, it is true and reliable in all the matters it addresses.

We deny that it is possible for the Bible to be at the same time infallible and errant in its assertions. Infallibility and inerrancy may be distinguished, but not separated.

### **Article XII**

We affirm that Scripture in its entirety is inerrant, being free from all falsehood, fraud, or deceit.

We deny that Biblical infallibility and inerrancy are limited to spiritual, religious, or redemptive themes, exclusive of assertions in the fields of history and science. We further deny that scientific hypotheses about earth

history may properly be used to overturn the teaching of Scripture on creation and the flood.

### **Article XIII**

We affirm the propriety of using inerrancy as a theological term with reference to the complete truthfulness of Scripture.

We deny that it is proper to evaluate Scripture according to standards of truth and error that are alien to its usage or purpose. We further deny that inerrancy is negated by Biblical phenomena such as a lack of modern technical precision, irregularities of grammar or spelling, observational descriptions of nature, the reporting of falsehoods, the use of hyperbole and round numbers, the topical arrangement of material, variant selections of material in parallel accounts, or the use of free citations.

### **Article XIV**

We affirm the unity and internal consistency of Scripture.

We deny that alleged errors and discrepancies that have not yet been resolved vitiate the truth claims of the Bible.

### **Article XV**

We affirm that the doctrine of inerrancy is grounded in the teaching of the Bible about inspiration.

We deny that Jesus' teaching about Scripture may be dismissed by appeals to accommodation or to any natural limitation of His humanity.

### **Article XVI**

We affirm that the doctrine of inerrancy has been integral to the Church's faith throughout its history.

We deny that inerrancy is a doctrine invented by Scholastic Protestantism, or is a reactionary position postulated in response to negative higher criticism.

### **Article XVII**

We affirm that the Holy Spirit bears witness to the Scriptures, assuring believers of the truthfulness of God's written Word.

We deny that this witness of the Holy Spirit operates in isolation from or against Scripture.

### **Article XVIII**

We affirm that the text of Scripture is to be interpreted by grammatical-historical exegesis, taking account of its literary forms and devices, and that Scripture is to interpret Scripture.

We deny the legitimacy of any treatment of the text or quest for sources lying behind it that leads to relativizing, dehistoricizing, or discounting its teaching, or rejecting its claims to authorship.

### **Article XIX**

We affirm that a confession of the full authority, infallibility, and inerrancy of Scripture is vital to a sound understanding of the whole of the Christian faith. We further affirm that such confession should lead to increasing conformity to the image of Christ.

We deny that such confession is necessary for salvation. However, we further deny that inerrancy can be rejected without grave consequences, both to the individual and to the Church.





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P. 4 – Luther posting his 95 theses in 1517, Ferdinand Pauwels

# For the Love of the Truth

95 NEW THESES FOR OUR GENERATION

**Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.**

Hebrews 10:23

*If I profess with the loudest voice and clearest exposition every portion of the truth of God except precisely that little point which the world and the devil are at that moment attacking, I am not confessing Christ, however boldly I may be professing Christ. Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved; and to be steady on all the battlefield besides, is mere flight and disgrace if he flinches at that point. – Martin Luther*

*We must speak the truth in love so that the children of faith may be protected from destructive influence.*  
– Martyn Llyod-Jones

*Truth carries with it confrontation. Truth demands confrontation; loving confrontation, but confrontation nevertheless.*  
– Francis A. Schaeffer

