

Revised "Concluding Affirmations and Rejections"
Sept. 28, 2000

1.

Affirm: God promises to initiate and sustain a saving relationship with Himself only through the means of grace. Signs and wonders and spiritual gifts given by God may accompany the means of grace.

Reject: That signs and wonders and spiritual gifts have been given as marks of the true church; that the Church has been given an ongoing command (e.g., "Go ye therefore . . . baptizing," "this do ye oft") to perform signs and wonders; and that signs and wonders and spiritual gifts are brought about according to the schedules of human beings.

2.

Affirm: That prayer is a response to God's grace and may be used to express our desires regarding spiritual gifts and blessings (I Corinthians 14:1, Luke 11:9-13).

Reject: That prayer or the charismata are means of grace.

3.

Affirm: The Holy Spirit equips the church with spiritual gifts to accomplish His gracious purposes among the people He calls to be His own.

Reject: That God has promised to give every spiritual gift at all times, at all places, and to all congregations of Christians.

4.

Affirm: The Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts according to His good pleasure and design (1 Cor. 12:11, 18). God's people should be eager and desirous to receive the gifts that God chooses to bestow upon them (1 Cor. 12:31; 14:1).

Reject: That God's people should unconditionally seek specific gifts of their own choosing or demand to be blessed with a specific manifestation of the Spirit.

5.

Affirm: The conclusion that someone today has received a particular spiritual gift is a human judgment and therefore subject to error.

Reject: That God makes known to us in Scripture who today has received a particular spiritual gift; that God's people have assurance from God apart from Scripture that their judgment about the presence or possession of a spiritual gift is correct and accurate; and that God gives us an infallible test to guarantee the authenticity of someone's claim to possess a spiritual gift.

6.

Affirm: The Holy Spirit leads Christians to express their unity in Christ in doctrinal agreement and in love.

Reject: That the basis of doctrinal unity in the church involves only a common confession of articles of faith concerning the person and work of the Holy Spirit.

7.

Affirm: The Bible teaches everything necessary for the knowledge of salvation and for leading a Christian life (the sufficiency of Scripture) and Scripture alone is the source and norm of spiritual knowledge and teaching for the church today (*sola scriptura*).

Reject: That the Holy Spirit has neglected to teach in Scripture any doctrine necessary for the salvation or sanctification of any soul and that something other than Scripture should be considered the source and norm of spiritual knowledge and teaching in the church.

8.

Affirm: The New Testament speaks of a gift of prophecy that God used on occasions such as those mentioned in Acts 11:27 and Acts 21:10, when He chose to supply practical guidance and helpful information regarding temporal matters to his covenant people. The New Testament also warns about false prophets (Matthew 7:15, Matthew 24:11 & 24, 2 Peter 2:1) and exhorts His people to test critically that which purports to come from the Lord (I Thessalonians 5:16-22, I John 4:1-6).

Reject: That a prophecy from God will ever contradict that which is already revealed in Scripture (Deuteronomy 13:1-4; cf. Luther, AE, vol. 24, p. 369) or fail to be accurate in announcing something concerning the future. (Deuteronomy 18:21-22).