

A Brief and Untechnical Statement of the Reformed Faith

(By permission, a paraphrased reprint of the essay by theologian B.B. Warfield)

1. We believe that our one aim in life and death should be to glorify God and enjoy Him forever; and that God teaches us how to glorify and enjoy Him in His holy Word, the Bible, which He has given by the infallible inspiration of His Holy Spirit. He gave us His Word so that we may know for certain what we are to believe about Him and how He designed us to live.
2. We believe that God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal and incomparable in all that He is; one God but three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, our Creator, our Redeemer, and our Perfecter. We can safely put our trust in His power and wisdom, righteousness, goodness, and truth.
3. We believe that the heavens and the earth, and all that is in them are the work of God's hands; and that all that He has made He directs and governs, including things, events, people, and their actions. Therefore, they fulfill the end for which they were created, and we who trust in Him shall not be put to shame but may rest securely in the protection of His almighty love.
4. We believe that God created man after his own image, in knowledge, righteousness and holiness, and entered into a covenant of life with him with the sole condition of the obedience that He was due. So that it was by willfully sinning against God that man fell into the sin and misery in which we have been born.
5. We believe that being fallen in Adam, our first father, we are by nature children of wrath, under the condemnation of God and corrupted in body and soul, prone to evil and deserving of eternal death. From this dreadful state we cannot be delivered except through the unearned grace of God our Savior.
6. We believe that God has not left the world to perish in its sin, but out of the great love with which He has loved it, He has from all eternity graciously chosen unto Himself a multitude of souls that no man can count. He has purposed to deliver them out of their sin and misery, and in and through them to build up again in the world His kingdom of righteousness. And we may be assured that we may have a part in that kingdom if we personally hold fast to Christ the Lord.
7. We believe that God has redeemed His people unto Himself through Jesus Christ our Lord. Though Jesus was and forever is the eternal Son of God, yet He was born of a woman, born under the law that He might redeem those that are under the law's penalty and requirements. We believe that He bore the penalty due to our sins in His own body on the cross, and fulfilled in His own person the obedience we owe to God in His holiness. As our perfect Substitute He now presents us to His Father as His purchased possession, to the praise of the glory of His grace forever. Therefore, renouncing all merit of our own, we put all our trust only in the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ who died and lived on our behalf, our redeemer.
8. We believe that Jesus Christ our redeemer, who died for our offenses was raised again from the dead securing our acquittal in God's court. We believe that Jesus ascended into heaven where He sits at the right hand of the Father Almighty, continually making intercession for His people, and governing the whole world as head over all things for His church. This means that we need fear no evil and may surely know that nothing can snatch us out of His hands and nothing can separate us from His love.

9. We believe that the redemption accomplished by the Lord Jesus Christ is effectually applied and sealed to all his people by the Holy Spirit, who works faith in us personally and thereby unites us to Christ. His own Spirit living in us renews us in our whole person after the image of God, and enables us more and more to die unto sin and to live unto righteousness. This gracious work will be completed in us only when we are received into glory, but abiding in this certain hope, we always strive to grow in holiness and reverence for God.

10. We believe that God requires of us, under the gospel, that out of a true sense of our sin and misery and apprehension of his mercy in Christ, that we turn with grief and hatred away from sin and receive Jesus Christ, and rest upon Him alone for salvation. Being so united to Him, we receive pardon for all of our sins and we are accepted as righteous in God's sight, but only because the righteousness of Christ is credited to us and is mine by faith alone. We believe that in this way only will we be received into God's family and have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God.

11. We believe that, having been pardoned and accepted for Christ's sake, it is necessary that we walk in the Spirit of Christ whom He has provided for us, and by whom love is poured out in our hearts. It is only by the inner working of the Holy Spirit that we fulfill the obedience that we owe Christ our King, that we faithfully perform all the duties laid upon us by the holy law of God our heavenly Father. Only by the Spirit's power will we reflect in our lives the perfect example set for us by Christ Jesus our leader, who died for us and gave to us His Holy Spirit just so that we may do the good works which God beforehand prepared that we should accomplish.

12. We believe that God has established His Church in the world and endowed it with the ministry of the Word; the holy sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the access of prayer. While God works directly, without any medium, He also has worked through these means the riches of His grace in the gospel that it be made known to the world. The benefits of redemption are given to God's people by Christ's blessing and the working of His Spirit in the lives of those that by faith receive these means of grace – scripture, the communion of the saints, and prayer. Thus, it is essential for us to make use of these means of grace with diligence and prayer, so that through them we may be instructed and strengthened in faith, in holiness of life, and in love. Being so helped by God our Father, we use our best efforts to carry this gospel and pass these means of grace to the whole world.

13. We believe that as Jesus Christ has once come in grace, so also will He come a second time in glory, to judge the world in righteousness and assign to each his eternal award. And we believe that if we die in Christ, our souls shall be at death made perfect in holiness and go home to the Lord. Then, when He shall return in His majesty, we shall be raised in glory and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of God for all eternity. Encouraged by this blessed hope, we are called to be willing to take our part in suffering hardship here as a good soldier of Christ Jesus, being assured that if we die with Him we shall also live with Him. If we endure, we shall also reign with Him.

And to Him, our Redeemer, with the Father, and the Holy Spirit
Three Persons, one God, be glory forever, world without end,
Amen, and Amen.