

A Brief and Untechnical Statement of the Reformed Faith

By B.B. Warfield

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1. I believe that God, since the creation of His world, has plainly revealed through the things He has made His eternal power and divine nature, and the requirements of His law, so that there is no excuse for unbelief or disobedience on the part of any man; yet however glorious this revelation, it is not sufficient to give that knowledge of God, and of His will, which is necessary for salvation.

2. I believe that my one aim in life and death should be to glorify God and enjoy Him forever; and that God teaches me how to glorify and enjoy Him in His inerrant Word, that is, the Bible, which He has given by the infallible inspiration of His Holy Spirit in order that I may certainly know what I am to believe concerning Him and what duty He requires of me.

3. I believe that the whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for His own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture; unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by alleged new revelations of the Spirit or by traditions of men.

4. I believe that God authenticated His prophets and apostles as agents of revelation by mighty acts of His power employed by Him as signs whereby all men should confess, concerning those who are gifted with such power, "We know you are a teacher sent from God, for no one could do the things you do lest God were with Him"; and I believe that the great outpouring of such miracles displayed in the ministry of Christ and His Apostles signified the breaking into history of God's promised kingdom, which kingdom, when established in its fullness, will issue in the miraculous renewal of all creation; and that until such time, God is at work bringing men and women into that kingdom through the supernatural work of regeneration.

5. I believe that because God has completed His revelation in Jesus Christ, the former ways of revealing His will are now ceased; and because the final and manifest establishment of His kingdom is yet to come, God does not now choose to publicly display His miraculous power. Nevertheless I believe that God is directly upholding and governing His creation, moment by moment; that God faithfully supplies the needs of His people through His constant providential care; and that He often blesses them with special providences wherein He strengthens their faith and displays His special love for them to the world.

6. I believe that God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth; incomparable in all that He is; one God but three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, my Creator, my Redeemer, and my Sanctifier; in whose power, wisdom, righteousness, goodness, and truth I may safely put my trust.

7. I believe that God has all life, glory, goodness, and blessedness, in and of Himself; and is alone in and unto Himself all-sufficient, not standing in need of me, or deriving any glory from me, but only manifesting His own glory in, by, unto, and upon me in Christ Jesus; and that He has most sovereign dominion over me, to do by me, for me, or upon me whatsoever He pleases.

8. I believe that God from all eternity, did, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass; yet thereby neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence done to the will of the creature; and trusting in the decree of God, I who am called according to His purpose, I may be assured that all things will work together for my good.

9. I believe that the heavens and the earth, and all that in them is, are the works of God's hands; and that all that He has made He directs and governs in all their actions, so that they fulfill the end for which they were created, and I who trust in Him shall not be put to shame, but may rest securely in the protection of His almighty love.

10. I believe that God created man after His own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, and that all men owe their Creator thanksgiving and worship; yet God condescended, making a covenant with man, that men might know God, not just as Creator, but as their blessedness and reward. And I believe that while the requirement of this covenant, originating under Adam, was obedience, God was pleased, according to His wise and holy counsel, to permit him to disobey, having purposed to order it to His own glory; so that it was by willfully sinning against God that I, in Adam, lost the rewards of a covenant keeper, and suffer the curses due a covenant breaker. Therefore my only hope of salvation is that Christ the second Adam, has kept the covenant, securing its rewards for the elect, among whom by grace I am numbered.

11. I believe that, being fallen in Adam, my first father, I am by nature a child of wrath, under the condemnation of God and corrupted in body and soul, prone to evil and liable to eternal death; from which dreadful state I cannot be delivered save through the unmerited grace of God my Savior.

12. I believe that God has not left the world to perish in its sin, but out of the great love wherewith He has loved it, has from all eternity graciously chosen unto Himself a multitude which no man can number, to deliver them out of their sin and misery, and of them to build up again in the world His kingdom of righteousness; in which kingdom I may be assured I have my part, if I hold fast to Christ the Lord.

13. I believe that God has redeemed His people unto Himself through Jesus Christ our Lord; who, though He was and ever continues to be the eternal Son of God, yet was born of a woman, born under the law, that He might redeem them that are under the law; I believe that He bore the penalty due to my sins in His own body on the tree, and fulfilled in His own person the obedience I owe to the righteousness of God, and now presents me to His Father as His purchased possession, to the praise of the glory of His grace forever; wherefore renouncing all merit of my own, put all my trust only in the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ my redeemer.

14. I believe that Jesus Christ my redeemer, who died for my offenses was raised again for my justification, and ascended into the heavens, 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; so that I need fear no evil and may surely know that nothing can snatch me out of His hands and nothing can separate me from His love.

15. I believe that the redemption wrought by the Lord Jesus Christ is effectually applied to all His people by the Holy Spirit, who works faith in me and thereby unites me to Christ, renews me in the whole man after the image of God, and enables me more and more to die unto sin and to live unto righteousness; until His gracious work having been completed in me, I shall be received into glory; in which great hope abiding, I must ever strive to perfect holiness in the fear of God.

16. I believe that God requires of me, under the gospel, first of all, that, out of a true sense of my sin and misery and apprehension of His mercy in Christ, I should turn with grief and hatred away from sin and receive and rest upon Jesus Christ alone for salvation; that, so being united to Him, I may receive pardon for my sins and be accepted as righteous in God's sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to me and received by faith alone; thus, and thus only, do I believe I may be received into the number and have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God.

17. I believe that, having been pardoned and accepted for Christ's sake, it is further required of me that I walk in the Spirit whom He has purchased for me, and by whom love is shed abroad in my heart; fulfilling the obedience I owe to Christ my King; faithfully performing all the duties laid upon me by the holy law of God my heavenly Father; and ever reflecting in my life and conduct the perfect example that has been set me by Christ Jesus my leader, who has died for me and granted to me His Holy Spirit that I may do the good works which God has afore prepared that I should walk in them.

18. I believe that God has established His Church in the world, one and the same in all ages, and now, under the Gospel, has endowed it with the ministry of the Word and the holy ordinances of Baptism, the Lord's Supper and prayer; in order that through these means, the riches of His grace in the gospel may be known to the world, and by the blessing of Christ and the working of His Spirit in them that by faith receive them, the benefits of redemption may be communicated to His people; wherefore also it is required of me that I attend on these means of grace with diligence, preparation, and prayer, so that through them I may be instructed and strengthened in faith, and in holiness of life and in love; and that I use by best endeavors to carry this gospel and convey these means of grace to the whole world.

19. I believe that the visible Church consists of all those who are united to Christ, the Head of the Church, by profession of their faith, together with their children; and that the visible unity of the body of Christ, though obscured, is not destroyed by its division into different denominations of professing Christians. Therefore I believe that all of these which maintain the Word and Sacraments in their fundamental integrity are to be recognized as true branches of the Church of Jesus Christ.

20. I believe that God alone is Lord of the conscience and has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men, which are in any respect contrary to His Word, or beside it in matters of

faith or worship. I believe therefore, that the rights of private judgment in all matters that respect religion are universal and inalienable and that no religious constitution should be supported by the civil power, further than may be necessary for protection and security equal and common to all others.

21. I believe that the Church is God's spiritual minister for the purpose of redemption and the state is God's providential minister for the purpose of thisworldly order. The power of the Church is exclusively spiritual; that of the State includes the exercise of force. The constitution of the Church derives exclusively from divine revelation; the constitution of the State must be determined by human reason and the course of providential events. I believe therefore that the Church has no right to construct or modify a government for the State, and the State has no right to frame a creed or polity for the Church.

22. I believe that disciples of Jesus Christ are called to be His witnesses in the world, proclaiming the justice and mercy of God to all men, and making evident His wise and righteous rule over every aspect of human culture. Therefore it is my obligation to search the Scriptures with all the skills God has allotted me, and to seek, within the bounds of my calling, to apply my understanding of His Word to the entire created order, and to all the outworkings of His most wise providence. And I believe that it is my privilege and duty to pursue a vocation in this world that employs my gifts to the glory of God, and for the good of my family, my congregation, my community, and, as God brings opportunity, to any who may be in need.

23. I believe that as Jesus Christ has once come in grace, so also is He to come a second time in glory, to judge the world in righteousness and assign to each his eternal reward; the wicked shall have the fearful but just sentence of condemnation pronounced against them, wherein their consciences shall fully concur, and they shall be cast into hell, to be punished with unspeakable torments, both in body and soul, with the devil and his angels for ever. The righteous in Christ shall be caught up with Christ and there openly acknowledged and acquitted; shall be received into heaven, where they shall fully and forever be freed from all sin and misery; filled with inconceivable joys, made perfectly holy and happy in both body and soul, in the great company of all God's saints and holy angels, but especially in the immediate vision of God the Father, of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, to all eternity.

24. I believe that if I die in Christ, my soul shall be at death made perfect in holiness and go home to the Lord, and when He shall return in His majesty I shall be raised in glory and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of God to all eternity; encouraged by which blessed hope, it is required of me willingly to take my part in suffering hardships here as a good soldier of Christ Jesus, being assured that if I die with Him I shall also live with Him, if I endure, I shall also reign with Him.

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